Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

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CUC, Mobil renegotiate fuel contract. PAGE 2

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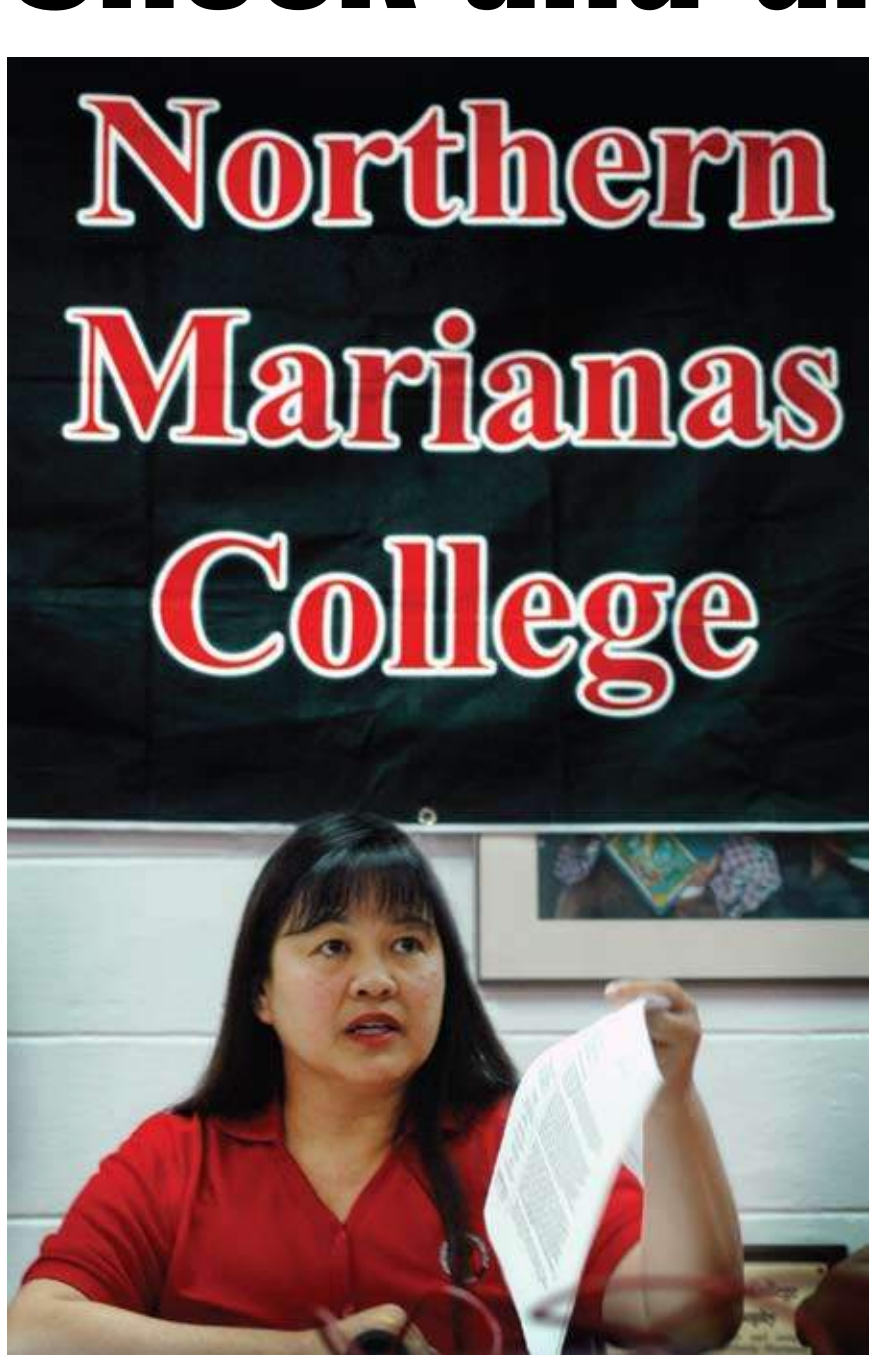
Shock and dismay at NMC



JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Northern Marianas College president Carmen Fernandez shows a copy of the show-cause order issued by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges inside the Board of Regents conference room during a press conference yesterday afternoon.

By RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN
rianne_pangelinan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Northern Marianas College officials expressed shock and dismay yesterday at the ultimatum issued by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges for the college to show cause why its accreditation should not be withdrawn.

According to NMC president Carmen Fernandez, the ultimatum, which gave the college six months to show cause why it should not lose its accreditation, is in stark contrast to the feedback they got during the last visit of an ACCJC team.

The ACCJC evaluation team last visited the college on Nov. 7-9, 2007.

"We had a very glowing and positive reviews from them. They have made statements on how we've made significant progress across the board and so we were shocked to receive the decision by the USDE to place NMC on show cause," said Fernandez.

She said NMC plans to work with Gov. Benigno R. Fitial and leaders of the Legislature to ensure that the college gets the necessary funding needed to achieve full compliance with the accrediting commission's requirements.

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Tobacco could kill 1 billion by 2100

By EDITH M. LEDERER
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

NEW YORK (AP)—The World Health Organization warned in a new report Thursday that the "tobacco epidemic" is growing and could claim 1 billion lives by the end of the century unless governments dramatically step up efforts to curb smoking.

In its first comprehensive report on tobacco use in 179 countries, the U.N.'s health agency said governments around the world collect more than $200 billion in tobacco taxes every year but spend less than one-fifth of 1 percent of that revenue on tobacco control, it said.

"We hold in our hands the solution to the global tobacco epidemic that threatens the lives of 1 billion men, women and children during this century," WHO Director-General Dr. Margaret Chan said in an introduction to the report.

The WHO Report on the Global Tobacco Epidemic 2008 calls on all countries to dramatically increase efforts to prevent young people from beginning

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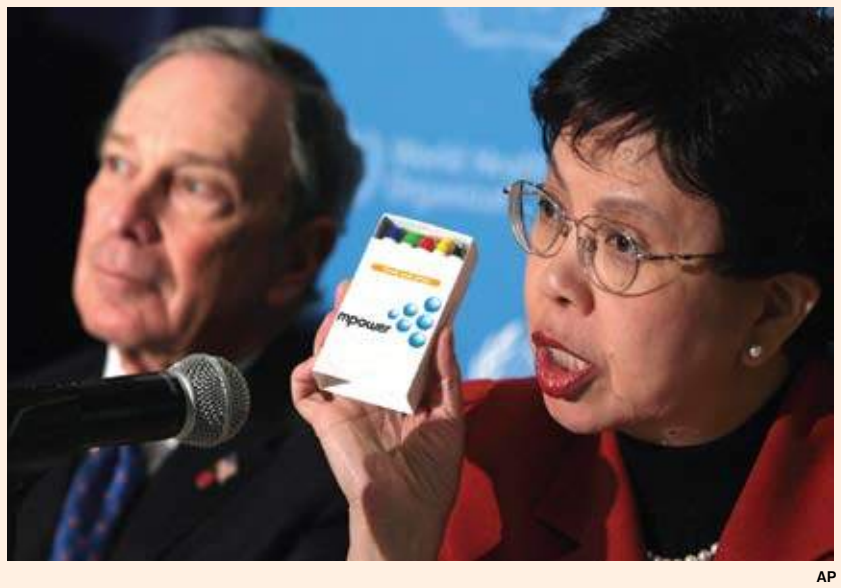

AP

World Health Organization Director-General Dr. Margaret Chan, right, speaks about the mpower box as New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg listens during a press conference announcing WHO's Report on the Global Tobacco Epidemic 2008 Thursday, Feb. 7, 2008 in New York.

Congress OKs stimulus package

Federal Treasury to cover Guam, NMI rebates

Bordallo

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Guam Delegate Madeleine Z. Bordallo hailed yesterday the passage of the economic stimulus package.

The bill, H.R. 5140, the "Economic Stimulus Act of 2008," was amended and passed by the Senate yesterday by a vote of 91 to 6 and later by the House of Representatives by a vote of 380 to 34.

Within hours of Senate passage, the House of Representatives took up and passed the amended bill. The House of Representatives, which initially passed an economic stimulus bill last week, needed to reconsider the bill with the Senate amendments before it

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OPINION METER

This week's poll:
Do you support the idea of stopping future automatic increases in the CNMI's minimum wage?

Let your voice be heard! Go to www.saipantribune.com to cast your vote.

INSIDE

Miracle Baby
At first, rescuers thought it was a doll. Then it moved.

NATION...Page 10

Starving Goats
More than 100,000 Himalayan goats–famed for their pashmina wool–or cashmere–are facing starvation.

ASIA...Page 11

Key Witness
The key witness in the Senate inquiry into the national broadband network controversy, tags Abalos.

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Local

CUC, Mobil renegotiate fuel contract

By AGNES E. DONATO
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REPORTER

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. has begun talks with Mobil Oil Marianas to renegotiate its fuel supply contract.

CUC executive director Anthony Guerrero said he had a meeting with Mobil representatives on Tuesday, Feb. 5, 2008, to discuss how the utility can lessen the cost of fuel.

Guerrero said the discussion focused not so much on reducing fuel prices as minimizing associated costs.

"We're asking Mobil to help relieve some of our costs. So far, they have been receptive. We will continue talking with them," he said.

According to Guerrero, CUC has asked the oil company to help CUC meet with U.S. Coast Guard requirements concerning fuel deliveries. Currently, CUC is in violation of Coast Guard requirements, which include ability to respond to an oil spill or emergency situations. CUC is at risk of facing penalties from the Coast Guard.

"Sooner or later, Coast Guard is going to assess penalties. Mobil is a large company, and it has resources to put the facilities we need to comply with requirements," he said.

Guerrero also said the utility has asked Mobil to consider granting credit to CUC. At present, CUC pays cash for each fuel delivery.

CUC opened talks with Mobil at the governor's instruction. Gov. Benigno R. Fitial told CUC to renegotiate amendments to the terms of its fuel supply contract, in order to reduce fuel costs.

The governor said earlier that $5 million had been reprogrammed from local funds to subsidize CUC's fuel costs since December 2007.

Program seeks to help parents with autistic kids

The CNMI Public School System Special Education Program will present the Strategies for Teaching based on Autism Research Program next week Wednesday.

Lead author of the STAR Program, Dr. Joel Arick, Ph.D., will be the guest speaker at next week's gathering.

The STAR Program has been used to provide intensive instruction in critical skills for children with autism in both self-contained programs and inclusive programs.

The program provides a structure that allows a teacher to implement instruction throughout the child's play day through typical school routines and to provide techniques to teach the child in short one-on-one instructional sessions.

The STAR Autism Program has been shown to be effectively implemented by public school early childhood and elementary level teachers, related service staff and instructional assistants.

Arick is a 30-year veteran in the field of autism.

He is the author of several other published programs on autism. The programs include the Functional Assessment and Curriculum for Teaching Everyday Routines, known as FACTER.

Arick is currently assisting the state of Oregon to develop a network of school-based training sites for children with autism in early intervention, elementary, and middle school age levels.

He is the director of the Portland State University Autism Training and Research Center.

Parents of children with autism spectrum disorder are encouraged to attend the STAR program, which will be held at the William S. Reyes Elementary School cafeteria on Wednesday from 6:30-8pm. Admission is free.

For more questions on next week's program, call PSS Special Education Julie Sarich at 237-3029 or visit www.staautismprogram.com. ***(Rianne Pangelinan-Brown)***

'Pour unspent CIP funds on power infrastructure'

By AGNES E. DONATO
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REPORTER

CNMI Resident Rep. Pete A. Tenorio says the Commonwealth should pour onto power infrastructure its unspent federal funds for capital improvement projects.

Tenorio said yesterday that the CNMI will get nowhere with requests for federal funds to fix its power crisis as long as it has tens of millions of unspent CIP funds.

"To address these problems we will need to reprogram existing 702 CIP funds, and I believe that we can easily convince the Department of Interior that it is justified for a major upgrade at CUC," stated Tenorio.

As of Jan. 24, 2008, the Northern Marianas had a backlog of CIP funds amounting to $57.4 million. By U.S. law, Rota and Tinian should each receive at least one-eighth of the 702 funds allocated to the Commonwealth, so Saipan cannot utilize the entire amount.

A large reprogramming will have to be approved by DOI, Office of Management and Budget, and possibly the U.S. congressional appropriating committees. But the CNMI should have no problem getting federal approval of the proposed reprogramming.

"This is very easy to justify, and I am very willing to make sure that the reprogramming gets approved. We may also have to dedicate some of the future CIP dollars if we need to float a bond to help pay for this, and I will assist with getting that approved, if needed," Tenorio said.

Tenorio said, however, that the governor will have to take the lead in requesting the reprogramming and developing the plans.

"We cannot afford to allow tens of millions of CIP dollars lay fallow while our people struggle with rolling power outages, damaged electrical appliances, and worry how they are going to pay their bills," he said.

He also urged the Legislature to pass a resolution requesting the reprogramming. Speaker Arnold Palacios recently has expressed support for funneling the unused CIP funds to addressing the power crisis.

"Let's stop delaying. We need to act now to alleviate our very critical power problems. It will take years of planning before we begin construction of a new power plant so we must begin planning for financing, architectural and engineering design, design review and contract award," Tenorio said.

February is National Children's Dental Health Month

By RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN
Rianne_pangelinan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The CNMI is once again joining the whole nation in celebrating and observing "National Children's Dental Health Month" this February.

Through the initiative of the Seventh Day Adventist Dental Clinic, the children in the CNMI, for the seventh year, are once again reminded of their responsibilities to take care of their teeth.

In line with this, dental hygienist Lori Serna visited William S. Reyes Elementary School Wednesday and held a presentation to second grade students under the class of Junie Sablan.

Serna demonstrated proper dental hygiene, from the correct way of brushing one's teeth to taking care of one's gums.

Puzzles, games, and other fun demonstrations on dental care were provided at the presentation.

The National Children's Health Month is a U.S.-wide celebration that SDA is heavily involved in annually.

Each February, the American Dental Association sponsors National Children's Dental Health Month to raise awareness about the importance of oral health.

Developing good habits at an early age and scheduling regular dental visits, according to Serna, help children get a good start on a lifetime of healthy teeth and gums.

Serna said SDA tries to visit the schools at least once a month.

William S. Reyes Elementary School second grade students show off their new toothbrushes with Seventh Day Adventist dental hygienist Lori Serna. February is National Children's Dental Health Month.

She said that SDA targets most of the public schools as studies show they tend to have the lowest socio-economic level, and U.S. studies have shown that that's where the need is.

"The lower the socio-economic level, the higher incidence of dental cavities," said Serna.

She explained that in the mainland, statistics have shown that 40 to 60 percent of school age students have at least one cavity.

"If in the mainland 40 to 60 percent children have cavities, it's got to be higher over here," she said.

"It's about awareness and a lot of parents are not aware. They need to follow up and supervise children when they brush as young children do not have the dexterity to do it on their own," Serna explained.

The demonstrations provided by SDA remind children to take care of their teeth and prevent dental decay before it starts. During these visits students will also receive free toothbrushes and stickers, courtesy of the clinic.

Also, in celebration of the NCDHM, SDA is offering free dental examinations to children up to the age of 16.

Parents who wish to take advantage of this offer are encouraged to call the Seventh Day Adventist at 234-6323 to schedule an appointment for March.

The annual observance of children's dental health began as a one-day event in Cleveland, Ohio on Feb. 3, 1941. The American Dental Association held the first national observance of Children's Dental Health Day on Feb. 8, 1949. This single day observance became a weeklong event in 1955. In 1981, the program was extended to a month-long celebration, known today as National Children's Dental Health Month.

Labor warns employer of permanent disqualification

The Department of Labor has warned an employer with permanent disqualification from hiring alien workers if she again fails to comply with her promise to pay unpaid wages plus sanctions to two guest workers.

Labor Administrative Hearing Officer Jerry Cody ordered the employer, Daria M. Kintol, to pay $965 to Celia L. Gonzales and $937 to Anacoreta A. Abuel on or before March 7, 2008.

Cody said that if Kintol fails to pay the amounts by that date, she will be required to pay liquidated damages to each worker in the amount of the unpaid settlement.

Cody directed the respondent to pay the overdue $300 sanction and pay an additional $500 sanction to the CNMI Treasury.

"Kintol's failure to pay any amounts whatsoever to complainants, as promised, materially breached the agreements and violated the administrative orders," he said.

Labor records show that Gonzales and Abuel brought labor claims in 2007 against their employer, Kintol, alleging unpaid wages.

All claims were settled in mediation on April 2, 2007, each by means of a stipulated settlement agreement and administrative order signed by the parties.

Cody approved the settlement and imposed sanctions against both complainants and Kintol.

Cody

Under the terms of the agreement with Gonzales, Kintol was required to pay $965 to the worker over a three-month period from June to August 2007.

The employer also agreed to pay a sanction of $300 to the CNMI Treasury on or before May 1, 2007.

In Abuel's case, Kintol was required to pay $937 to the worker in three installments over a three-month period from May to July 2007.

Kintol also agreed to pay a sanction of $300 to the CNMI Treasury on or before April 15, 2007.

In his order, Cody said the employer failed to make any settlement payments to either complainants from the date of the settlement until the present.

Additionally, Cody said, the respondent failed to pay the second $300 sanction due on May 1, 2007 under the agreement with Gonzales.

He said Kintol's only excuse was that she had other debts that she chose to pay first before these settlement payments. In effect, the hearing officer said, the respondent decided that other debts took priority over these settlement claims.

Cody said that Kintol admitted that she knew the payments were overdue, but she never approached the hearing office with any request to modify the payment schedules.

Kintol's breach of the agreements would entitle complainants to an award of liquidated damages in the amount of the unpaid settlements, he said.

Although complainants initially asked in writing that the hearing officer assess such damages, at the hearing the workers took a more conciliatory stance.

Cody said the complainants agreed to forego liquidated damages provided that Kintol pays each of them the full settlement amounts on or before March 7, 2008. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

Raraina Restaurant
February 14th, 2008
6:30pm – 10:00pm
Pink Rose Romance
Valentine Special Course Menu includes:
Glass or Bottle of Bottega Petalo Moscato
Menu for two
Pink Rose for the lady
Guylian Seashell Chocolate for the lady
Choice of Illy Coffee, Cappuccino or Espresso
With Bottle $80.00/person
With Glass $60.00/person
With romantic live performance of piano and violin.
Limited to 30 couples only!
Reservation is required.
*Ladies who wears something in "Pink "will receive special welcome drink " Pretty in Pink"
Special Package: $200.00
Dinner for two with glass of Bottega Petalo Moscato and a Gift Certificate for Full Body Aroma Massage.
ARC
AQUA RESORT CLUB
Saipan
For inquiry and more information, please call 322-1234

Kempthorne welcomes FSM President

WASHINGTON, D.C.—On his first personal trip to Washington, D.C. as FSM President, Emanuel Mori paid a courtesy call on Interior Secretary Dirk Kempthorne.

Both Kempthorne and Mori were delighted to meet again. They met last year in June 2007, when Kempthorne visited Pohnpei on his trip to the Pacific U.S. Insular Areas.

Kempthorne thanked Mori for the FSM's patriotism and partnership with the U.S. in the War on Terror. The rate of enlistment into the U.S. Armed Forces for people from the FSM and other U.S.-affiliated insular areas is much higher per capita than for the U.S. mainland. Mori has a daughter currently serving in the U.S. Air Force. The Secretary also thanked and commended Mori for his courage in beginning implementation of much needed government reforms in the FSM.

Mori thanked Kempthorne for the United States' continued support of the FSM and expressed his appreciation for the special relationship that exists between the two countries and his intent to strengthen that relationship during his administration.

INTERIOR DEPARTMENT

From left, James T. Stovall, Joshua, Epel Ilon, Fabian Nimea, Nikolao Pula, Interior Secretary Dirk Kempthorne, FSM President Emanuel Mori, Miriam Hughes, Steve McGann, James Naich, Jane Chigiyal, Doug Domenech, Beffrey, and Edgar.

Accompanying the President were Fabian Nimea, director of FSM SBOC; Epel Ilon, assistant director of FSM SBOC; Jane Chigiyal, assistant secretary for American and European Affairs; James Naich, deputy chief of mission for the FSM Embassy in D.C.; and James T. Stovall, counsel.

Present with the Secretary from Interior were Doug Domenech, deputy chief of staff; Nikolao Pula, acting deputy assistant secretary for Insular Affairs, and OIA staff. Representing the State Department were Miriam Hughes, U.S. Ambassador to the FSM, and Steve McGann, director of the Office of Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific Islands.

The FSM is one of three independent countries that have a special relationship with the U.S. through the Compacts of Free Association. The other countries are the Republic of the Marshall Islands and the Republic of Palau. Together, these three countries are often referred to as the Freely Associated States.

Under the Compacts, citizens of the FAS can travel freely to live and work in the U.S. without a visa and can enlist in the U.S. Armed Forces. The FAS also receive financial assistance under the Compacts. The Secretary of the Interior, through the Office of Insular Affairs, is the administrator of the financial assistance to the FSM. In return for the benefits FSM citizens enjoy under the compact, the U.S. has defense rights in the FSM. The freely associated states are formerly part of the U.N. Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands under U.S. administration.

Mori is in Washington, D.C. to participate in the annual National Prayer Breakfast events that was held on Feb. 6. ***(DOI)***

CLARIFICATION

In the story titled "Claims vs estate of late Summer Holiday owner denied" that was published Feb. 8, 2008, Camacho Investment Corp. clarified that the late Vicente C. Camacho was just a part-owner of the Summer Holiday Hotel, with a title of president. CIC also clarified that the Summer Holiday Suites is not actually a hotel but an apartment and that Camacho contracted the services of CIC to service the apartment.

TOBACCO

From Page 1

to smoke, help smokers quit and protect nonsmokers from exposure to second hand smoke.

It urges governments to adopt six "tobacco control policies"—raise taxes and prices of tobacco; ban tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship; protect people from second hand smoke; warn people about the dangers of tobacco; help those who want to quit smoking; and monitor tobacco use to understand and reverse the epidemic.

Chan announced the report Thursday at a news conference with New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg, whose foundation, Bloomberg Philanthropies, helped fund it with a $2 million grant. The report examines the tobacco policies of 179 countries for the first time, Bloomberg said.

According to the report, nearly two-thirds of the world's smokers live in 10 countries: China, which accounts for nearly 30 percent, India with about 10 percent, Indonesia, Russia, the United States, Japan, Brazil, Bangladesh, Germany and Turkey.

It forecast that more than 80 percent of tobacco-related deaths will be in low- and middle-income countries by 2030.

Dr. Douglas Bettcher, director of WHO's Tobacco Free Initiative, said WHO estimates 5.4 million smoking-related deaths a year, rising to more than 8 million a year by 2030 if nothing is done. That adds up to 175 million between 2005 and 2030. Beyond that, he said, deaths will continue to rise and statistical projections put the death toll at near 1 billion by the end of the century.

Tobacco use is growing fastest in low-income countries, the report said, "due to steady population growth coupled with tobacco industry targeting, ensuring that millions of people become fatally addicted each year."

It warned that "the shift of the tobacco epidemic to the developing world will lead to unprecedented levels of disease and early death in countries where population growth and the potential for increased tobacco use are highest and where health care services are least available."

According to the report, 74 countries still allow smoking in health care institutions and about the same number allow smoking in schools. More than half the countries, with two-thirds of the world's population, allow smoking in government offices and workplaces, and only 20 of 179 countries have complete bans on tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship.

"The tobacco epidemic is growing—it is shifting toward developing countries, with tobacco use growing fastest in low-income countries," Chan said.

For the tobacco industry to survive, and keep existing customers hooked and attract new customers, "it spends tens of billions of dollars a year on advertising, promotion and sponsorship," WHO said.

Michael Pfeil, vice president for communications for Lausanne, Switzerland-based Philip Morris International, said the company advocates "for tough, fair, cohesive regulation of the industry" and believes many countries need to do more. The company has operations in 160 countries.

He said regulations Philip Morris supports mirror some core provisions of the U.N. anti-smoking treaty that came into force last year. These include mandatory health warnings, restrictions on advertising including bans in some media, and minimum age laws for smoking, he said.

"We're going to continue to spend money," Pfeil said in a telephone interview. "I think we have a duty as a commercial entity to continue to grow our business, but ... our interest is in marketing to adult smokers who are smoking competitive products."

CONGRESS

From Page 1

could be sent to the President.

President Bush indicated he would sign the measure.

The Senate, among other changes, amended the bill to definitively qualify additional low income individuals, including social security recipients and disabled veterans, for the tax rebates. The bill, as amended, would provide tax relief this year for millions of Americans, including qualified workers and families in the CNMI and Guam.

Tax rebates of $600 per individual, $1,200 per couple, and $300 per child, are to be provided to taxpayers under the terms of the final economic stimulus package passed by Congress. The bill guarantees workers who earned at least $3,000 in 2007 will receive at least a $300 tax rebate.

The final bill includes the provision for federal coverage of the tax rebates for qualifying taxpayers and families in the territories. The bill protects the local treasury from any loss that would otherwise be incurred for payout of the tax rebates mandated by the bill. Bordallo worked in partnership with her colleagues from the territories in securing this provision.

Apart from the tax rebate provisions, included in the final bill are investment incentives to ease the pressure on the housing market and on small businesses.

"The final bill is a stronger package. The good news is our local treasury is protected from any loss. The federal treasury will cover the tax rebates for our workers, our families, our seniors, and our veterans. This bill is a step forward to keep our economy growing and to provide our families and small businesses important tax relief," Bordallo said.

The bill will now be transmitted to the President.

Tax rebates could be expected as early as mid-May. ***(PR)***

SHOCK

From Page 1

"Our estimate is $2 million to be able to achieve or accelerate full compliance," Fernandez said.

In its letter to Fernandez, the ACCJC stated, "The Accrediting Commission is compelled to place the institution on show cause subject to termination in January 2009 and to ask that NMC correct the deficiencies noted."

A show cause is issued when the Commission finds that an institution is in substantial non-compliance with its eligibility criteria, standards, or policies or when the institution has not responded to the condition imposed by the Commission.

"Although we do not agree with the decision, we respect the commissioner's decision and we intend to mobilize all efforts to achieve accreditation reaffirmation in January 2009," Fernandez said.

She added that NMC does not intend to give up accreditation of the institution "We intend to fight for it and again work together with the community to be able to achieve reaffirmation come January 2009," Fernandez said.

What is required from NMC is a progress quarter show-cause report on Oct. 15, 2008. Then in January 2008, the Commission will issue a decision as to accreditation reaffirmation or other sanctions against the college.

"Again, our intention is to step up all efforts to ensure we are coming to full compliance so as to achieve reaffirmation in January 2009," said Fernandez.

According to the ACCJC, the show cause was issued to NMC because the college has failed to adequately address recommendations issued by the Commission over the last several years and has remained unable to make progress in using student achievement data for regular assessment of education programs.

"The institution's fiscal fragility also raises Commission concerns about the long-term viability of the college," the ACCJC stated.

Fernandez said, though, that the college has made great progress with the ability to use data and evidence for program review, program improvement and decision-making.

"By summer, we should have most of our program reviews completed," she said.

Accreditation is important because it proves to the public that a college meets standards of quality, and allows students to access financial aid programs. In addition, many institutions look at accreditation when deciding whether to allow transfer of credits.

A source said that, in NMC's case, loss of accreditation could lead to closure of the college. NMC has reportedly been ordered to make preparations for closure during the six-month show cause period.

Accreditation officials are expected to visit the college in the next months.

Navy solicits input from Guam, CNMI

SANTA RITA, Guam—The Joint Guam Program Office announced yesterday the start of Environmental Impact Statement data collection visit designed to obtain information for assessing socioeconomic impacts associated with the relocation of Marines from Okinawa to Guam. The data collection visits, conducted by a team of experts, is part of the overall EIS required by the National Environmental Policy Act.

NEPA ensures that federal agencies consider environmental issues in planning and decision-making. The Act requires that federal agencies prepare an EIS for actions that may significantly affect the human or natural environment. The final EIS is a detailed study of the potential consequences that a federal action may have on the environment. Data collection and analysis contribute to a detailed study.

JGPO and the team have coordinated mid-February meetings with the Guam and CNMI governors, the Chambers of Commerce, other island resources and community subject matter experts to understand current conditions and identify how the increased military presence could affect education, health care services, employment opportunities, property values, crime, cost of living, and other socioeconomic issues. The feedback will help EIS planners correctly assess the impacts of the proposed action on the community.

"Analysis of socioeconomic impacts is essential to understanding the effects the relocation will have on Guam, " said Major Gen. (Ret.) David Bice, executive director of the Joint Guam Program Office. "We continue to work closely with the Guam and CNMI governments, community and business leaders to address the public's concerns and work towards potential solutions."

Data gathered in these data collection visits will be incorporated in the Draft EIS, which will be available in early 2009. Public hearings will be held to allow for community input before the final EIS is released in early 2010. Additionally, JGPO will seek feedback from the community at other points throughout the process.

JGPO facilitates the realignment of Marines from Okinawa to Guam. JGPO works within the Department of Defense and closely with the Government of Japan, Government of Guam, U.S. Congress and federal agencies to lead and manage the delivery of required capabilities to the Marines. ***(PR)***

PTI Tinian cellular equipment upgrade

All PTI Tinian cellular customers are being informed that all cellular communications will be unavailable on Tuesday, Feb. 12, from approximately 9pm until Wednesday, Feb. 13 at 9am (weather permitting) in order to complete equipment upgrades that will expand coverage on Tinian.

This will only affect cellular calls coming from or into Tinian. Saipan and Rota cellular service will not be affected.

All other PTI services on Tinian (landline, DSL, long distance) will be unaffected by this upgrade.

PTI apologizes for any inconvenience this will cause. Call 433-3499 or 682-4PTI with any questions. ***(PTI)***

Sailors to volunteer at Mathcounts

SANTA RITA, Guam—Sailors have volunteered to assist with the Mathcounts Competition Feb. 9, 9am at Guam Marriott Resort and Spa in Tumon.

Sailors from commands including U.S. Naval Computer and Telecommunications Station Guam will be judges during the competition.

MATHCOUNTS is a national math enrichment, coaching and competition program that promotes middle school mathematics achievement in every U.S. state and territory. Schools select students to compete individually or as part of a team in one of the more than 500 written and oral competitions held nationwide. MATHCOUNTS challenges students' math skills, develops their self-confidence and rewards them for their achievements.

The mission of NCTS is to provide continuous global and universal communications services to fleet units, shore activities, and joint forces. ***(PR)***

SPELLING BEE CHAMPS CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Congratulations go out to Simon Jed Necesito, son of Edhuel Necisito and Juliet Tupas, who bested 1,100 other middle schoolers to win first place in the Hopwood Junior High School 2008 Scripps Howard Spelling Bee. His winning word was "nauseous" in the 9th round. Equally awesome first runner-up is Eumer Valezuela, son of Manolito Lustre and Cristina Lustre. Harry Blalock and John Anderson helped with pronunciation, and Arayanee Maratita helped with judging and coordination of the final round. Here, John Anderson, Spelling Bee pronouncer, left, poses with Necesito, center, and Valezuela. Other picture shows all the finalists in Round Four.

Pacific library staff to attend Hawaii training

Twenty residents of the U.S.-affiliated Pacific have been selected to attend the 2008 Pacific Library Training Institute in Honolulu, Hawaii.

The PLTI, funded by the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services and organized by Pacific Resources for Education and Learning, will take place from July 21 through Aug. 8, 2008, at the University of Hawaii at M□noa.

By providing professional development to this group of pre-professional staff working in special libraries in their home jurisdictions, the PLTI seeks to improve library services across the region.

The attendees are: Nathaidia Moeia from American Samoa; Erlinda Naputi and Gregorio Sablan from the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands; Kersweet Eria from Chuuk, Federated States of Micronesia; Shra Renton from Kosrae, FSM; Atarino Helieisar, Karleen Manuel, Julia Martin, and Julie Nimea from Pohnpei, FSM; Erica Ruwepin and Helen Salap from Yap, FSM; Walfrid Benavente and Lourdes Nedegog from Guam; Pearl Anien, Tina Edmond, and Kiona Lalimo from the Republic of the Marshall Islands; and Pioria Asito, Everett Belelai, Sandy Fernandez, and Grace Merong from the Republic of Palau. ***(PREL)***

YOUR WEEKEND IS AT
CLUB V
February 1 and 2, 2008 Friday and Saturday
HIP HOP JAM 2
the return of DJ'S Q AND BERG
AND THE CREW OF WREXXSHOP
With the Hottest,
Sexiest Band so far
ZYNERGY
Win raffle prizes
Comedy Show starts 6pm
Followed by HIP HOP JAM 2 and ZYNERGY
Comedy Tickets available at the gate
HIP HOP JAM 2 and ZYNERGY
Door Opens at 6pm
$5.00 door charge
with 1 complimentary drink
Another exciting offer from the grand!
SGH Saipan Grand Hotel
A TanHoldings Company
CHIVAS REGAL 12
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Opinion

Hafa Adai!
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EDITORIAL

On the presidency

Super Tuesday wasn't all that super for supporters of the presidential candidates who hoped the contests in 24 states would identify a nominee in each party. But just as nobody really won, nobody really lost either. Well, almost nobody. Sorry, Gov. Romney.

Mike Huckabee is playing the spoiler in the Republican race, splitting the hard-core conservative vote with Mitt Romney and letting John McCain run away with the moderates -- and, quite possibly, with the party's nomination. Still, it's hard to imagine that Huckabee, who surprised analysts by winning not only his home state of Arkansas but West Virginia, Alabama, Georgia and Tennessee, really thinks that he has much of a chance of becoming the Republican front-runner. Though he's popular in the Bible Belt, he's an afterthought in larger states north of the Mason-Dixon line. That means he probably has a different reason for staying in the race: to burnish his credentials as McCain's running mate.

Romney's victories were in small states: Utah, Minnesota, Montana, Colorado, North Dakota and Alaska. He also took his home state of Massachusetts, but it's doubtful whether he could carry the majority-Democratic state in November. Romney was a moderate governor but has reinvented himself as the kind of red-meat conservative right-wing radio hosts adore; the problem with this strategy is that it turns off many of the party faithful who prefer a man of conviction. It also doesn't help with Chamber of Commerce conservatives that he oversaw the nation's first experiment with mandatory universal health care, which the Wall Street Journal likes to deride as "Hillarycare."

What's more, the sniping between Romney and McCain has become so heated that it would be surprising if the two men could reconcile. Huckabee is strong in Southern states and with the religious right, two areas of weakness for McCain. Strategically, he's a logical choice as running mate. So it's probably all or nothing for Romney, and unless he can pick up some large states soon, he's going to be spending a lot more time with his family come June.

For Democrats, the race is as exciting as the Republicans' is dispiriting, but the calculus is a lot trickier. Barack Obama should be cheered by his success among affluent white voters and young people. Hillary Rodham Clinton can celebrate her popularity with Latinos, an advantage that may prove decisive when Texas holds its primary on March 4. For the moment, however, Obama has money and a favorable calendar: Upcoming states such as Washington, Louisiana, Virginia and Maryland all have great potential. This one promises to be a nail-biter for some time to come.

(c) 2008, Los Angeles Times

Forget 40 and fabulous

By MEGHAN DAUM
Special to the Los Angeles Times

Daum is an essayist and novelist in Los Angeles. E-mail Daum at mdaum@latimescolumnists.com

Misery really does love company. How else to explain our endless fascination with studies about why it's so much easier to worry than be happy? In the past few years, researchers have provided us with all manner of mood-related news, much of which has gotten more ink than civil unrest in Third World countries (and no wonder; that stuff is really depressing).

We've learned from Harvard psychologist Daniel Gilbert, author of "Stumbling on Happiness," that there's little correlation between money and personal fulfillment (unless it lifts someone out of poverty). We've learned, courtesy of a survey called the World Database of Happiness, that Danes are less gloomy than other Europeans because their expectations tend to be lower. And despite the fact that census figures show that in the United States married people are outnumbered by singles, the notion that marriage makes people happier is still considered conventional wisdom. Along the same conventional lines, a Pew Research Center study from 2006 found that going to church, voting Republican and, uh, being white provided extra boosts in the contentment department.

But nevermind all that. The big news this week from the Department of Depression is that happiness might have more to do with age than money, relationship status, geography or anything else.

Working with data from 2 million people in 80 countries, American and British researchers found that feelings of psychological well-being follow a U-shaped pattern, meaning that most people feel happy when they're young and get progressively less so as they head into their fifth decade. The average age for hitting bottom emotionally was 44, with women reaching their low point around 40 and men around 50. Interestingly, the researchers found, those who remain healthy after 70 are likely to see their happiness levels return to the levels of most 20-year-olds.

Andrew Oswald of the University of Warwick, who co-wrote the study with Dartmouth College's David Blanchflower, offers up a number of theories as to why middle age can feel as grim as the Middle Ages. "One possibility is that individuals learn to adapt to their strengths and weaknesses and in midlife quell their infeasible aspirations," Oswald stated in a news release. "Another possibility is that cheerful people live systematically longer. A third possibility is that a kind of comparison process is at work in which people have seen similar-aged peers die and value more their own remaining years. Perhaps people somehow learn to count their blessings."

Am I crazy (or, more likely, experiencing the edges of middle-age grouchiness) or is this sciencey-speak for what we can figure out on our own? Doesn't Oswald mean that part of getting older is recognizing that you're never going to be a rock star/compete in the Olympics/marry a supermodel, and that this knowledge becomes less of a bummer as the years go by and you're just glad not to be dead?

What is noteworthy and, I dare say, just a tiny bit groundbreaking in this study is that the researchers aren't blaming external factors for people's discontent. Instead of telling us we're gloomy because we haven't walked down the aisle or seriously considered voting for Mitt Romney, they seem to be suggesting that this is simply the way things are.

"Some people suffer more than others, but in our data, the average effect is large," Oswald said in the release. "It happens to men and women, to single and married people, to rich and poor and to those with and without children."

That's a pretty radical concept for those of us in a post-Prozac, post-Dr. Phil world, where feeling bad is generally assumed to be an occasion for strenuous (or at least expensive) efforts toward self-improvement. As we've been reminded recently by the new HBO series "In Treatment," which takes place in a psychotherapist's office and features a different analysand for every day of the week, problems of the soul are generally perceived to be highly individualized and fundamentally solvable.

But what if we were to enter a therapist's office and be told that feeling depressed is just a natural part of the aging process, the psychological equivalent of extra waistline fat or arthritic knees? Moreover, what if your typical 44-year-old American was told that his depression, while probably not wholly unrelated to some trauma dating back to toddlerhood, is ultimately not all that different from that of 44-year-olds in most of the world?

He would, in all likelihood, get a second opinion (or a sports car), but something tells me he might also accomplish the next best thing to actually feeling good: He might feel less depressed about being depressed. That's not a bad way to wait out the years until your 70th birthday.

EDITORIAL POLICY The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, CIC Centre, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

In need of treatment, not talk

By TONY NEWMAN
SPECIAL TO THE BALTIMORE SUN

Visiting Baltimore last week, President Bush shared his struggles against alcohol addiction with former prisoners in recovery who are enrolled in Jericho, a program to help them re-enter productively into society. Bush recounted having given up alcohol the day after his 40th birthday, after a "particularly boozy night." He often credits his Christian faith for giving him the strength to stay sober.

Although his presidency is almost over, it's not too late for Bush to do much good as a role model and advocate for people recovering from addiction.

Bush, Al Gore III, Rush Limbaugh and Rep. Patrick J. Kennedy all remind us that anyone can be susceptible to drug problems; addiction does not discriminate. Unfortunately, our drug policies do. Despite similar rates of drug use, blacks go to jail at 13 times the rate of whites. In New York state, 91 percent of the people incarcerated under the Rockefeller drug laws are black or Hispanic—grossly disproportionate to their share of the population or involvement in illegal drug use and sales. Too often, treatment is reserved for the privileged, jail for the poor.

Almost every family in America has had to deal with drug addiction or has experienced collateral damage from the drug war. George W. Bush is not the only Bush to have had serious problems with addiction. His niece Noelle Bush was arrested for trying to fill a fake prescription for Xanax. While in a treatment program, she was busted for crack cocaine.

Fortunately for her, she was able to get help without being forced to spend years behind bars. Millions of other people without money or powerful connections are not as lucky. Millions nationwide have a loved one behind bars on drug charges, and millions more have struggled themselves with addiction to illegal or legal drugs. By declaring a war on drugs, we have declared a war on ourselves.

Bush was able to give up his drinking cold turkey and used his faith to help himself. Millions use abstinence programs such as Alcoholics Anonymous when trying to give up drugs. Some people give up one addiction, such as heroin but might hold on to smoking marijuana or cigarettes. Many people who quit a drug will relapse one or more times before finding the strength to quit again. There are many pathways and strategies for dealing with an addiction. There is no one size fits all approach.

Bush's words of encouragement to the men he encountered at Jericho were well-intentioned. But actions are better than words, and the government could do a few things that would make a huge difference in the lives of drug offenders.

One would think that Bush's personal struggles would have him advocate for treatment over jail and punishment. "Addiction is hard to overcome," Bush told the ex-offenders, and that's true. But maybe it would be a little easier if the government were to put more resources into treatment. According to the Office of National Drug Control Policy, only 35 percent of the federal drug control budget is spent on education, prevention and treatment combined, with the remaining 65 percent devoted to law-enforcement efforts.

Our drug policies have led to the United States' becoming the world leader in incarceration. We have 5 percent of the world's population but 25 percent of all the world's prisoners, with more than 2.3 million in prisons and jails, more per capita than Russia, Belarus or China. Of that 2.3 million, about 500,000 are incarcerated on drug charges.

I appreciate Bush's opening up and sharing his struggles with drug addiction. (Yes, alcohol is a drug.) It is helpful to remind people that addiction is an issue that so many of us have had to deal with—that spares no one.

I just wish that his personal experiences would give him the wisdom and courage to advocate generous and caring drug policies for everyone.

Short on words, deep in meaning

By LARRY SMITH AND RACHEL FERSHLEISER
SPECIAL TO THE LOS ANGELES TIMES

Everyone has a story. That's the tag on the masthead of SMITH, our online magazine. Yet until we asked the world to send us six-word memoirs, even we had no idea how true it was.

We took a page from Ernest Hemingway. According to legend, he was challenged to write a novel in only six words and came up with "For sale: baby shoes, never worn." We posed the same challenge online, but we asked for true-life stories—in just half a dozen well-chosen words.

To launch the challenge, we posted examples from names we figured most readers would know, such as "Eat, Pray, Love" author Elizabeth Gilbert ("Me see world! Me write stories!"; she naturally e-mailed hers in from an airport runway in Indonesia) and celebrity chef Mario Batali (he sent seven, each enlightening but none as pitch-perfect as "Brought it to a boil, often").

More than 15,000 (and counting) submissions later, we arecontinually struck by what proves possible in just six words.The short, short life stories keep coming in. As we type this, a quick glance reveals that Emily Hambridge "wanted to write but feared failure." With half a dozen words and a few clicks of the keyboard, she's just rewritten the story of her life.

What's yours?

- Ex-wife and contractor now have house.—Drew Peck
- Wasn't born a redhead; fixed that.—Andie Grace
- Chinese immigrant loathing drama in Anaheim.—Eric Wong
- Can't tonight, watching "Law & Order."—Rory Evans
- Found true love, married someone else.—Bjorn Stromberg
- Fifteen years since last professional haircut.—Dave Eggers
- One tooth, one cavity, life's cruel.—John Bettencourt
- Must remember: people, gadgets. That order.—Brian Lam
- Made a mess. Cleaned it up.—Amy Anderson
- Hockey is not just for boys.—Alexandra Duplin
- Put whole self in, shook about.—Melissa Delzio
- My second-grade teacher was right.—Janelle Brown
- Well, I thought it was funny.—Stephen Colbert
- Where the hell are my keys?—Brady Udall
- Dad wore leather pants in Reno.—John Falk
- Secret of life: Marry an Italian.—Nora Ephron
- Little bit Lucy, tempered by Ethel. --Tami Maus
- I think, therefore I am bald.—Dickie Widjaja
- Took scenic route, got in late.—Will Blythe
- Being a monk stunk. Better gay.—Bob Redman
- Became my mother. Please shoot me.—Cynthia Kaplan
- Should not have eaten those mushrooms.—Emilie Raguso
- Was father, boys died, still sad.—Ronald Zalewski
- ABCs MTV SATs THC IRA NPR.—Jancee Dunn
- It's pretty high. You go first.—Alan Eagle
- Me: consistently avoiding death since 1978!—Daniel Fowlkes
- New Jersey to California. Thank God.—Ayelet Waldman
- I still make coffee for two.—Zak Nelson
- It was embarrassing, so don't ask.—Alex Lindquist

Smith, founder of the online magazine SMITH, *and Fershleiser are the co-editors of* Not Quite What I Was Planning: Six-Word Memoirs by Writers Famous & Obscure. *Read/submit memoirs at smithmag.net.*

Letter to the Editor

Philosophy behind guest worker program

Lots of debates regarding the pro- and anti-federalization plus Public Law 15-108 (which is now in effect), forums, informal meetings and toolbox talks are very much alive in the Commonwealth among locals and foreigners alike at this very moment. Aside from attending forums, meetings and to find a more viable input, I found a very significant article coming from an independent organization that I hope will support the effort of many foreign workers here in the island seeking for improvement in their working status.

This article, titled "Guest Worker Program," was published in the US Immigration website (http://www.usimmigrationsupport.org/guestworkerprogram.html). I am providing you with a copy of the said article so that both locals and foreigners will understand that no less than President Bush himself wants to improved the status of foreign workers because of their great contributions to the US economy.

Guest Worker Program

In 2004 President Bush proposed a guest worker program as a way of giving back to illegal immigrants. He discussed the important role that immigrants have played in the United States by shaping America into what it is today. The United States has had a tradition of welcoming foreigners into the country who have tended to assimilate well into American culture. Bush mentioned that the growth of immigrants over time has propelled the economy into the world's largest and has allowed it to become a powerhouse. Their contributions continue to be evident as they take on difficult jobs that many times require long hours. Immigrants are also known for starting their own businesses which help contribute to the U.S. economy. President Bush drew upon his personal experiences as a Texan to point out how Mexican immigrants he knew had made a difference in the country. He also added that they bring certain values with them like family, work ethic and independence.

One specific example that he brought up was the thousands of immigrants that currently serve in the military. They may be foreign born but this did not deter them from embracing the service opportunities that this country has to offer.

Bush emphasized the qualities that immigrants brought to the country and how the United States was dependent upon them. Therefore, he suggested that changes in the current immigration system needed to be introduced. Some employers take advantage of the current situation of illegal immigrants by paying them less than minimum wage. Many hard-working illegal immigrants find themselves fearing deportation due to nationwide raids where documents are verified. Another possibility is that someone will report them to authority figures which can lead to deportation as well. Bush mentioned that having to spend their efforts on patrolling the borders so as to prevent immigrants from entering the country illegally hampers the efforts of securing the country overall. Thus, President Bush has proposed that a better immigration system be introduced so that more immigrants are able to achieve the American Dream.

Many immigrants come with the intention of improving their lives which is something that is shared by humanity in general. President Bush mentioned how they end up taking the jobs that many Americans will not even consider. Illegal immigrants make many sacrifices to reach the United States and often take abuse. Other times they are exploited but this goes unreported due to fear that they may end up being deported. Bush claimed that the current immigration system was not fair and that laws needed to become more humane. Under Bush's proposed temporary worker program, foreign workers would be given the opportunity to fill a job that Americans are not willing to take. Beforehand, the company must make reasonable efforts to find an American that will take the job. In the case that they cannot find a willing American, then they can resort to hiring an immigrant who has a valid permit. Permits will be given for a three year period and would be renewable upon meeting certain requirements. Those violating any requirements or laws will have their permit revoked and deported to their homeland. Employers will be required to hire only those with a valid permit. In addition, employers must report the information to the government so that they can keep track of those in the system. The government will also enforce harsh penalties for employers who violate any work laws under the guest worker program.

Those who participate in the program will be required to register and possibly pay a fee. This would depend on whether they were currently residing in the country or if they are currently abroad. To identify individuals in the program they will be given a temporary worker card. Bush would also work closely with the foreign governments to make sure that after the permit has expired they will have incentives to return to their country. In addition, he would also find a way to have the credit of a temporary worker applied to the retirement system in the foreign country. The temporary workers would also be able to contribute part of their earnings to some type of retirement savings plan. While the program proposed in 2004 was not approved, the guest worker program still is being promoted by President Bush. He mentioned the need for such program in a two day summit in Cancun, Mexico in March 2006. Currently, the guest worker program is part of a Senate bill on immigration reform that could grant amnesty to 12 million immigrants in the United States.

Disclaimer: This article was published by an independent organization. It should be used for information purposes only. Access it at http://www.usimmigrationsupport.org/guestworkerprogram.html.

Carlito Jimenez Marquez
Puerto Rico, Saipan

Sattelite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers. East winds 20 to 25 mph.	Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers. East winds 20 to 25 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲85° ▼76°	▲85° ▼74°	▲84° ▼75°	▲84° ▼75°	▲84° ▼73°

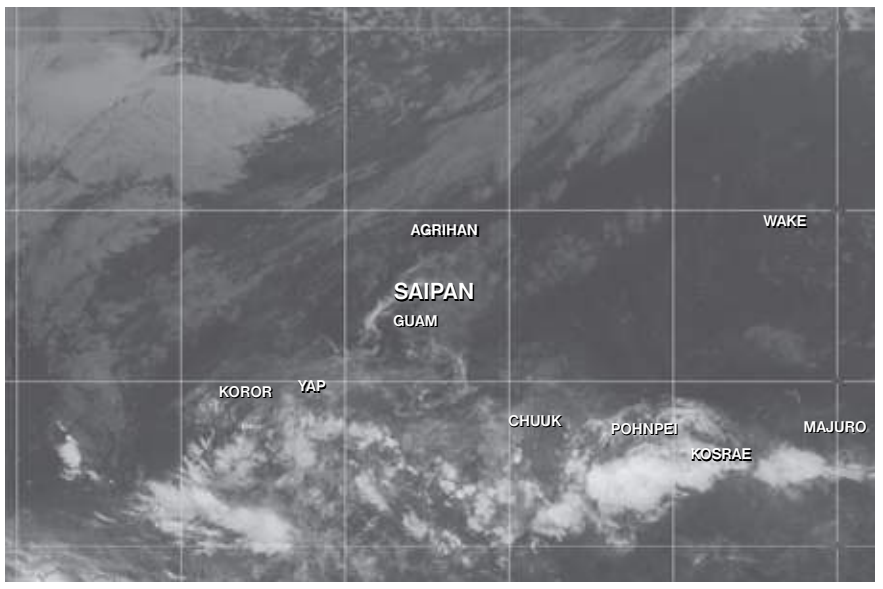
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Partly Sunny	▲87	▼77
Palau	Thunderstorms	▲84	▼77
Yap	Cloudy	▲89	▼77
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	▲88	▼78
Pohnpei	Showers	▲85	▼76
Kosrae	Cloudy	▲88	▼75
Majuro	Partly Sunny	▲85	▼76

Around The Globe

Auckland	Mostly Cloudy	▲76	▼69
Beijing	Sunny	▲36	▼21
Hong Kong	Partly Sunny	▲59	▼52
Honolulu	Cloudy	▲80	▼69
London	Partly Sunny	▲55	▼36
Los Angeles	Sunny	▲78	▼50
Manila	Cloudy	▲86	▼74
Melbourne	Cloudy	▲69	▼52
Miami	T'Showers	▲82	▼64
New York	Showers	▲45	▼35
Osaka	Showers	▲43	▼31
Paris	Mostly Sunny	▲53	▼37
Pusan	Mostly Sunny	▲44	▼28
Rome	Mostly Sunny	▲54	▼33
Salem	Showers	▲49	▼38
San Francisco	Partly Sunny	▲61	▼44
Seoul	Partly Sunny	▲36	▼19
Tokyo	Rain	▲45	▼37
Washington, DC	Showers	▲54	▼36

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, FRIDAY, FEB. 8, 2008
Western North Pacific between Equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A cold front extends southwestward from 25N153E through the northernmost Mariana Islands at 20N145E, then continues as a shear line to beyond 130E at 12N. Extensive cloudiness and scattered showers are found along and up to 300 miles northwest of this boundary. A near-equatorial trough runs eastward from EQ132E through a weak circulation centered southeast of Koror at 1N138E to end at EQ142E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms are found south of a line from 4N130E to 6N133E to 7N140E to 3N147E. A trade-wind disturbance is causing scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms in Chuuk, Pohnpei and Kosrae states within 125 miles of a line from 1N151E to 6N163E. Convergent trade winds producing scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms east of Kosrae, but south of Kwajalein and Majuro within 150 miles of a line from 5N152E to 5N160E to 5N174E.

Tides

Saipan Harbor		
3:05AM Today	Low Tide:	0.2 Feet
9:41AM Today	High Tide:	2.0 Feet
3:37PM Today	Low Tide:	1.8 Feet
8:54PM Today	High Tide:	1.9 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:44AM	6:18PM
Sunday	6:44AM	6:19PM
Monday	6:44AM	6:19PM
Tuesday	6:43AM	6:19PM
Wednesday	6:43AM	6:20PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	8:00AM	8:12PM
Sunday	8:39AM	9:06PM
Monday	9:19AM	10:02PM
Tuesday	10:00AM	11:00PM
Wednesday	10:46AM	12:01AM*

*Following Day

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  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
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ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

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- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

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- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

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- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF FEBRUARY 2, 2008

DEPARTURES

Saipan-Rota			
CO 9313	8:30am	9:05am	3,4,7
Saipan-Guam			
CO9317	5:00am	5:50am	Daily
CO9597	8:30am	9:20am	1,2,5,6
CO9313	8:30am	10:00am	3,4,7 via Rota
CO9601	12:30pm	1:20pm	Daily
CO9603	3:30pm	4:20pm	Daily
CO9605	6:30pm	7:20pm	Daily
CO9599	9:30pm	10:20pm	Daily
Saipan-Narita			
NW 078	8:25am	1:30pm	Daily via Nagoya
NW 075	4:50pm	7:30pm	Daily
Saipan-Osaka			
NW 083	4:30pm	7:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Nagoya			
NW 078	8:25am	11:05am	Daily
Saipan-Manila			
CO 895	4:45pm	6:35pm	6
CO 895	6:45pm	8:35pm	3
Saipan-Seoul			
OZ 604	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ 604	2:40am	6:30am	2,3,4,5,6,7
OZ 606	3:30pm	7:00pm	2,4,6,7
Saipan-Busan			
OZ 608	4:00am	7:35am	1,4,5,7
Saipan-Guanzhou			
CZ 3008	5:00am	8:00am	2,6
Saipan-Shanghai			
MU 590	4:20am	7:00am	2,6
Saipan-Beijing			
CA 988	3:15am	7:00am	1,5
Guam-Manila			
CO 891	6:00am	10:30am	3 via Yap and Koror
CO 893	6:30am	8:05am	6
CO 893	8:25am	10:00am	2,7
CO 893	5:50pm	9:10pm	5 via Koror
CO 933	8:00pm	9:40pm	Daily
PR 111	6:00am	7:45am	1,2,4,6,7
Guam-Hongkong			
CO 909	7:45pm	10:40pm	1,5
Guam-Rota			
CO 9598	10:15am	10:45am	1,2,6

ARRIVALS

Rota-Saipan			
CO 9598	11:10am	11:45am	1,2,6
Guam-Saipan			
CO 9316	2:30am	3:20am	Daily
CO9596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
CO9598	10:15am	11:45am	1,2,6 via Rota
CO9600	10:45am	11:35am	3,4,5,7
CO9602	2:00pm	2:50pm	Daily
CO9604	5:00pm	5:50pm	Daily
CO9606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily
Narita-Saipan			
NW 076	10:35am	3:05pm	Daily
NW 077	6:15pm	1:10am+1	Daily via Nagoya
Osaka-Saipan			
NW 084	10:40am	3:10pm	Daily
Nagoya-Saipan			
NW 077	8:45pm	1:10am+1	Daily
Manila-Saipan			
CO 890	9:15am	2:55pm	6
CO 890	11:45am	5:35pm	3
Seoul-Saipan			
OZ 605	9:00am	2:30pm	2,4,6,7
OZ 603	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ 603	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1,2,3,4,5,6
Busan-Saipan			
OZ 607	9:30pm	2:50am+1	3,4,6,7
Guanzhou-Saipan			
CZ 3007	8:00pm	4:00am+1	1,5
Shanghai-Saipan			
MU 589	8:05pm	3:00am+1	1,5
Beijing-Saipan			
CA 987	6:05pm	1:55am+1	4,7
Manila-Guam			
CO 894	11:20am	4:55pm	2,7
CO 894	7:45pm	1:20am+1	6
CO 892	9:45pm	5:25am+1	3 via Koror
CO 892	9:45pm	6:30am+1	3 via Koror and Yap
CO 892	10:10pm	5:30am+1	5 via Koror
CO 934	11:10pm	4:40am+1	Daily
PR 110	10:15pm	4:00am+1	1,3,5,6,7
Hongkong-Guam			
CO 910	11:40pm	6:20am+1	1,5
Rota-Guam			
CO 9313	9:30am	10:00am	3,4,7

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; PR: Philippine Airlines; CZ: China Southern; CA: Air China; NW: Northwest; JO: Japan Airlines; OZ: Asiana; MU: China Eastern ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

Schedule of Religious Services

CATHOLIC

Mt. Carmel Cathedral
Sunday Mass: 6am, 9am, 11am and 6pm
Monday-Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6am and 6pm

Korean Center
Sunday: 10:30am
Wednesday: 10am
Thursday-Friday: 8pm
Saturday: 3pm and 7:30pm

Kristo Rai Parish
Sunday Mass: 6am, 8am and 9:30am
Monday- Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6am and 6pm
Saturday: 6am and 6pm

Nuestra Senora De Soledad Parish
Wednesday Mass: 6pm
First Friday Healing Mass: 6pm
Saturday Mass: 6pm
Sunday Masses: 7:30am & 9am

Saint Jude Parish
Sunday: 6am, 8am, 10am
Wednesday and Thursday: 6pm

San Antonio Parish
Sunday: 6am and 8am
Tuesday and Friday: 6pm

San Francisco de Borja-Rota
Sunday: 6am and 8am
Monday-Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6pm

San Isidro-Rota
Sunday: 5am and 10am
Monday-Wednesday: 7pm
Thursday-Saturday: 5am and 7pm

San Jose (Oleai) Parish
Sunday: 6am and 7:30am
Tuesday-Wednesday and Friday-Saturday: 6pm

San Roque Parish
Sunday: 9am
Wednesday: 6pm
Saturday: 10:30am

San Vicente Parish
Sunday: 6am, 9am and 6pm
Monday-Saturday: 6pm

Santa Remedios
Sunday: 7:30am
Tuesday: 6pm
Saturday: 10am-Baptism

Santa Soledad
Sunday: 7:30am

PROTESTANT

Born Again Christian (Upper Room Int'l Ministries), Saipan
Wednesday Prayer and Healing Night: 8-10:30pm
Saturday Tagalog Service: 8-10:30pm
Sunday English Service: 9:30-11am
Sunday School for Children: 10-11am
Sunday Filipino Service: 7-9pm

Calvary Baptist Church, Saipan
Sunday School: 9am
Sunday Morning Worship: 10am
Sunday Evening Worship: 6pm
Wednesday Prayer Service: 7pm

Chinese Christian Church of Saipan
Worship Services: Sunday, 10am and 7:30pm
Bible Study: Tuesday-Friday, 9:25pm

Cornerstone Christian Church, Saipan
Worship/Study Opportunities
Adult Sunday School: 9am
Youth Sunday School: 9am
English Worship Service Sunday: 10am
Sunday Service: 5:30pm
Worship/Fellowship Sunday: 9:30pm
Evangelism/Follow-up: Sunday/Monday: 1:30/7:30pm
Worship Team: Monday/Saturday-9pm;
Cell Groups Tuesday: 7:30pm
Mid-week Service: 7:30pm
Prayer Meeting Wednesday: 7:30pm
Leader's Bible Study Friday: 7:30 pm
Cornerstone School of Ministry Saturday: 7:30pm

Episcopal/Anglican Church on Saipan
St. Paul's Episcopal Church
Worship Service Sunday: Holy Communion 9:00am
Place: Vicarage, Chalan Laulau,
Call 235-0545 for directions

Grace Christian Assembly, Saipan
Worship Service: 9am
GBI Classes: 4-6pm
Prayer Meeting: Monday-Saturday: 6am
Sunday: 7am
Home Cell Bible Study: Wednesday-Friday: 7pm
Youth Service: Friday: 5:30pm

Iglesia Ni Cristo, Saipan
Thursday: 5:30am (Tagalog); 7:45 pm (English)
Saturday: 7:45pm (Tagalog)
Sunday: 6:45am (English)
Children Worship Service: Sunday, 9am (English)

Immanuel United Methodist Church Koblerville
Sunday Services
8:00 AM Choir Rehearsal
9:00 AM Family Worship
3:00 PM Choir Rehearsal
Wednesdays at Parsonage
7:00 PM Prayer, Share and Care

Immanuel Methodist Church (Filipino Congregation)
Sunday: 7:00am-Choir Rehearsal
8:00am-Church Service (Tagalog)
9:15am-Sunday School
Wednesday: 8:00pm-Prayer Meeting
Thursday: 7:30pm-Choir Practice (Church)
Saturday: 8:00pm-Choir Practice (Parsonage)

Jesus is Lord Church, Saipan
English Service: 9-11am, Sunday
Tagalog Service: 6-8pm, Sunday

Korean Presbyterian Church, Saipan
Sunday School: 8:20am
Sunday Adult: 10am
Sunday Adult: 11:30am
Sunday Evening: 7:30pm
Wednesday: 8pm

Life in the Son Christian Fellowship, Saipan
Sunday Worship Service: 10am–12noon
Tuesday: Leadership Institute 7pm-10pm
Wednesday: Corporate prayer 7pm-8pm
Last Friday of the month-prayer: 7pm-11pm
Friday: Youth on Fire: 7pm-9pm
Tel. No. 235-LIFE (5433)

Marianas Baptist Church, Saipan
English Worship Service: 9-10:30am
Evening Worship Service: 6-7pm
Children Sunday School: 9-10:30am
Tagalog Sunday School: 11am-12pm
English Sunday School: 11am-12pm
Korean Worship Service: 11am-12pm
Wednesday Prayer Meeting:
English, 7pm-8pm
Korean: 8:30pm-9:30pm

Missions Connection Ministry
Every Sunday Celebrations:
10am (English), 6pm (Tagalog)
Wednesday Bible Study: 7pm
Youth Impact Friday: 7pm
Saturday Prayer Meeting: 7pm

Northern Marianas Christian Church
Sunday Worship Service 10am Fina Sisu Housing FS#1 (Child care will be provided)
Friday Services @ 7pm Fina Sisu FS#1 for more info pls. contact Ryan 484-2620

Saipan Bible Fellowship Church
Sunday School: 9:30-10am
Divine Worship: 10am-11:30am
Evening Service: 7pm-8:30pm
Wednesday Prayer Meeting: 8pm-9pm

Saipan Christian Church
Sunday: 7:30am-10am
Sunday: 6:30 pm -9pm
Monday: 8 pm -10pm (Prayer Meeting)
Thursday: 8pm-10pm (Cell Groups)

Saipan Church of Christ
Sunday Bible Class: 9am
Sunday Worship: 10am
Sunday Worship English: 6pm
Sunday Worship Tagalog: 7pm
Wednesday Bible Study: 7:30pm

Saipan Community Church
(Sunday Services)
Palau Service: 7:30am-9am
English Service: 10am-11:30am
Chuukese Service: 1pm-2:30pm
Filipino Service: 5:00pm-7:00pm

Seventh-Day Adventist Church, Saipan
(Saturday Church Services)
Sabbath School Program: 9-10am
Lesson Study: 10-10:40am
Divine Service: 11-12pm
Visitation: 3-4pm
Adventist Youth Program: 4:30-5:30pm
Sundown Worship: 6-7pm

First Baptist Church (Formerly Saipan Baptist Church)
Afetna St., San Antonio
Sunday
9am Sunday school
10am Regular worship
6pm worship
Wednesday
7pm worship
Everyone is warmly welcome to attend our worship services. Transportation is readily available to anyone who needs a ride to our church. For further information, please call Pastor David M. Mclure at 234-1939/235-7779.

Thy Word Ministries Saipan Faith Center
Phone 234-0209
New Christian Charismatic Church Service located in Chalan Paio, Beach Road in the Sablan building on the 2nd floor above Subway Sandwiches.
Senior Pastors: George & Gail Kamakahi
Asst. Pastors: Eric & Penny Sakaguchi
Service Times
Sunday 10:00am Worship Service
Sunday 7pm Discipleship Classes
Tuesday 10:00am Bible Studies
Tuesday 6:00pm Intercessory Prayer
Tuesday 7:00pm Music Practice
Wednesday 7:00pm Mid-Week Service
Saturday 10:00am Evangelism

Upper Room International Ministries
Sunday 5:30am-6:30am
Morning prayer
7am-9am English service
7am-9am Sunday school
10am-12noon
English service, Koblerville
Wednesday 7pm-9pm Prayer meeting
Saturday 7pm-9pm Tagalog service
Venue: Jason Presbyterian Church
Gualo Rai, Saipan

Victory Chapel Christian Fellowship Church
Sunday School: 9:30am
Sunday AM Worship:10:30am
Sunday PM Worship:7:00am
Wed Worship: 7:30pm
Prayer 45 min. Prior to Service Times
Morning Prayer: 6-8am M-S

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

FEBRUARY 9, 1999

CNMI needs PR job
After having been branded as a "slave island," the Northern Marianas may find it hard to save its ailing tourism economy if the CNMI government fails to hire a public relations firm immediately to counter the attracks and save its tarnished image in the international community. Dave M. Sablan, chairman of the board, said he has received inquiries from Japan and the United States asking about the much-publicized $1 billion class suit filed against U.S. buyers and garment manufacturers in the CNMI. The lawsuits filed in federal courts in California, New York and Saipan accused manufacturers and mainland-based buyers of labor violations against contract workers from China, Bangladesh and the Philippines.

Young, others arriving on Feb. 18
US Rep. Don Young (R-Alaska), along with key members of Congress, is set to arrive on February 18 for a four-day visit in the commonwealth which officials here consider crucial after they failed to convince the federal government to set aside a takeover of local labor and immigration. The Northern Marianas is hoping Young's visit would provide an opportunity to win the sympathy of US lawmakers in light of plans of Washington to extend federal laws on immigration and minimum wage to CNMI. Representatives of Saipan and Washington failed to bridge their differences in addressing concerns arising from the island economy's heavy dependence on foreign workers, whose growing presence over the years has spawned a host of problems.

FEBRUARY 9, 2000

U.S. Senate OKs takeover
In what had been just a constant threat before, the U.S. Senate on Monday approved, by voice vote, legislation seeking to extend federal immigration laws to the Northern Marianas. The move paves the way for Congress to alter the self-governing status provided to the Commonwealth under the Covenant agreement, which guarantees local control over immigration and minimum wage standards. The measure now heads to the U.S. House of Representatives for further review and is expected to draw stiff opposition from Republican members sympathetic to the island's conditions. This is the first time that a federal takeover proposal of the CNMI has reached both houses of the bicameral body.

We will continue reforms—Teno
Although saddened by the U.S. Senate's action on the immigration takeover bill, Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio yesterday vowed to continue labor and immigration reforms on the island while trying to appeal for understanding from Washington. He reiterated that extension of federal immigration laws to the CNMI will curtail both social and economic future of the Commonwealth as well as neighboring island communities. Tenorio, however, did not indicate what specific actions his administration would undertake to block passage in the U.S. House of Representatives of S. 1052, the bill that will automatically apply the Immigration and Nationality Act here once it takes effect.

FEBRUARY 9, 2001

Court orders Froilan to pay over $12M
The Superior Court threw out a motion filed last year by former governor Froilan C. Tenorio to reconsider a June 1997 court ruling that held the ex-chief executive liable for damages in excess of $12 million for misappropriation of public funds. Special Judge Benjamin J. F. Cruz has ordered Tenorio to pay the Commonwealth $12 million for breach of fiduciary duty. Further, the former governor has been sanctioned by the court to pay a total of $56,679 in attorney's fees and other costs to Jeanne H. Rayphand, the lawyer who filed in behalf of the CNMI taxpayers a civil action suit against Tenorio.

CNMI allies asked: Block minimum wage hike
House Speaker Benigno R. Fitial yesterday reached out to friends in the US Congress to enlist their help in defeating a bill seen to further aggravate the current condition of the Northern Marianas economy. In a letter to Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott, Mr. Fitial solicited the assistance of CNMI allies in the nation's capital to block the advancement of S.8, which seeks to increase local minimum wage to federal levels. The speaker said S.8 could easily destroy the CNMI economy. "I felt that the best way to defend ourselves from this attack was to enlist the help of the Senate Majority Leader."

Business

Microsoft helps nab $900M piracy ring

SEATTLE (AP)—Near-perfect knockoffs of 21 different Microsoft programs began surfacing around the world just over a decade ago. Soon, PCs in more than a dozen countries were running illegal copies of Windows and Office, turning unwitting consumers into criminals and, Microsoft says, exposing them to increased risk of malicious viruses and spyware.

The case began to turn in 2001 when U.S. Customs officers seized a shipping container in Los Angeles filled with $100 million in fake software, including 31,000 copies of the Windows operating system.

From there, Microsoft pushed the investigation through 22 countries. Local law enforcement officials seized software, equipment and records, and made arrests. A court in Taiwan handed down the last of the major sentences in December. Microsoft estimates the retail value of the software the operation generated at $900 million.

"That is a tremendous accomplishment," said James Spertus, a former federal prosecutor in Los Angeles who later led anti-piracy efforts for the Motion Picture Association of America. "There are only going to be a few cases like this a decade."

Now Microsoft is eager to talk about the experience because taking down that operation—responsible for about 90 percent of the fake software the company found between 1999 and 2004, more than 470,000 disks—didn't actually stop piracy. It just left room for more counterfeiters to rise. Microsoft hopes would-be pirates will think twice if they know how far it will go to protect the computer code worth billions in revenue each quarter. The pirates mimicked complex holograms stamped directly onto disks and packaging materials embedded with the kind of tiny safety threads used in making money. In some cases, it took experts with microscopes to notice that disks printed with codes used by legitimate software factories lacked certain minuscule, unique smudges.

"The copies were so good, we went to tremendous forensic and scientific lengths to establish that the counterfeits were, in fact, counterfeits," said David Finn, an associate general counsel at Microsoft.

Without a solid lead on the source, Microsoft continued to gather string. Members of its 80-person worldwide anti-piracy team made test buys to see if retailers were selling fake disks, knowingly or unwittingly, and worked leads back up the black-market supply chain.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Stores post disappointing January sales
NEW YORK (AP)—Here's a sign of how shaky the economy has become: Wal-Mart says its shoppers are redeeming their holiday gift cards for basic items - pasta sauce, diapers, laundry detergent—instead of iPods or DVDs. Merchants had hoped shoppers armed with gift cards would provide a lift after a dismal holiday shopping season - partly because shoppers tend to spend even more than the value of the card. But that didn't seem to happen last month, and retailers are feeling the pain. On Thursday, the nation's retailers turned in their worst January in almost four decades as high gas and food prices, a slumping housing market, tighter credit and a tougher job market pushed consumers to the edge.

Stocks finish higher after fitful day
NEW YORK (AP)—Wall Street finished moderately higher in fitful trading Thursday as investors, still nervous about the economy, decided to buy back into a stock market pummeled by three straight days of losses. With the market having largely priced in the possibility of a recession, many believe there are plenty of valuable stocks at cheap prices. Before Thursday, the Dow Jones industrial average had fallen this week by 543 points, or 4.26 percent, giving up all of last week's sharp gains. Though the market ended up rising Thursday, trading was extremely fickle due to a batch of gloomy data that included declining January sales at major retailers, a drop in December sales of pending homes, and a disappointing outlook from Internet networking supplier Cisco Systems Inc. The major indexes seesawed throughout the day.

Jobless claims decline
WASHINGTON (AP)—The number of newly laid off workers filing applications for unemployment benefits dropped last week, but not enough to indicate that strains on the labor market are easing. The Labor Department reported Thursday that 356,000 claims for jobless benefits were filed last week, a decline of 22,000 from the previous week. The decline only erased a part of the huge jump of 72,000 in claims of the previous week. The four-week average for jobless claims rose to 335,000, which was the highest level in a month. A severe slowdown in economic growth that has raised concerns about a possible recession has begun to affect the labor market.

Nation

Congress sends stimulus plan to Bush

WASHINGTON (AP—Congress, facing the prospect of an election-year recession, passed an emergency plan Thursday that rushes rebates of $600 to $1,200 to most taxpayers and $300 checks to disabled veterans, the elderly and other low-income people. President Bush indicated he would sign the measure.

House passage by a 380-34 vote came a few hours after Senate leaders ended a drawn-out stalemate over the bill. Still, by congressional standards, lawmakers approved the legislation with exceptional speed to jolt the weak economy. The plan, which adds $168 billion to the deficit over two years, is intended to provide cash for people to spend and tax relief for businesses to make new investments—boosts for an economy battered by a housing downturn and credit crunch.

Rebate checks could begin arriving in May. They would be based on 2007 tax returns, which are due April 15.

The Senate's 81-16 vote capped more than a week of political maneuvering. The logjam broke when majority Democrats dropped their demand that rescue proposal offer jobless benefits, heating aid for the poor and tax breaks for the home building and energy industries.

GOP senators blocked those ideas, but agreed to add $300 rebates for older people and disabled veterans to a $161 billion measure the House passed last week.

Bush called the bill "robust, broad-based, timely, and it will be effective." The compromise, he said in a statement after the Senate acted, was "an example of bipartisan cooperation at a time when the American people most expect it." The White House said Bush would sign the bill sometime next week.

The legislation would deliver rebates—$600 for individuals, $1,200 for couples—to most taxpayers, plus an additional $300 per child. Individuals making up to $75,000 a year and couples earning up to $150,000 would get the full rebate, with those making more than that or too little to owe taxes getting smaller checks.

6 dead after gunfire at Mo. meeting

KIRKWOOD, Mo. (AP) -- A gunman with a history of acrimony against civic leaders stormed City Hall during a council meeting Thursday night, killing two police officers and three other people before law enforcers fatally shot him, authorities said. The mayor was hurt in the rampage, a newspaper reported.

The victims at the meeting in suburban St. Louis were killed after the gunman rushed the council chambers and began firing as he yelled "shoot the mayor," according to St. Louis County Police spokeswoman Tracy Panus. Two people were wounded before Kirkwood police fatally shot him, she said.

The shooter killed one officer outside City Hall, then walked into the chambers and shot another before continuing to fire, Panus said.

Janet McNichols, a reporter covering the meeting for the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, told the newspaper that the 7 p.m. meeting with about 30 people had just started when the shooter rushed in and opened fire with at least one weapon. He started yelling about shooting the mayor while walking around and firing, hitting police Officer Tom Ballman in the head, she said.

Mayor Mike Swoboda was wounded, McNichols said. Public Works Director Kenneth Yost was shot in the head, and council members Michael H.T. Lynch and Connie Karr also were hit, she said.

McCain all but clinches; Romney departs

WASHINGTON (AP) -- John McCain sought to mend his tattered relationship with conservatives and unify a splintered GOP as he all but clinched the party's presidential nomination Thursday. Mitt Romney, his former chief rival, dropped out, and a parade of prominent Republicans swung behind the Arizona senator.

"We're continuing campaigning and not taking anything for granted," McCain said in an Associated Press interview, still reluctant to call himself anything more than the front-runner. "I certainly think that we have enhanced our chances."

Only Mike Huckabee and Ron Paul remained in what has been a crowded and wide-open nomination fight for the past year. Both have narrow voting constituencies and are far behind in the hunt for delegates to the GOP's nominating convention this summer.

Romney's departure left McCain, whose independent streak rankles many in the Republican rank-and-file, poised to assume President Bush's position as the party standard-bearer. It was a remarkable turnaround for McCain, whose campaign was barely alive last summer, out of cash and losing staff.

McCain

Romney

"It is my sincere hope that even if you believe I have occasionally erred in my reasoning as a fellow conservative, you will still allow that I have, in many ways important to all of us, maintained the record of a conservative," McCain told a gathering of the party's influential right flank on Thursday a few hours after Romney appeared before the same group to announce he was suspending his faltering bid.

Said Romney, "I must now stand aside, for our party and our country.

"If I fight on in my campaign, all the way to the convention, I would forestall the launch of a national campaign and make it more likely that Senator (Hillary Rodham) Clinton or (Barack) Obama would win."

Romney's fate had been virtually sealed earlier this week when he failed to stop McCain's coast-to-coast Super Tuesday rout in presidential primaries; McCain and Romney spoke by phone Thursday but no endorsement was sought nor offered.

Baby a sign of hope in devastated South

AP

Kyson Stowell, 11 months, is shown in a hospital in Nashville, Tenn., Thursday, Feb. 7, 2008.

CASTALIAN SPRINGS, Tenn. (AP)—At first, rescuers thought it was a doll. Then it moved. In a grassy pasture strewn with toys, splintered lumber and bricks tossed by the tornado's widespread wrath, 11-month old Kyson Stowell was lying face down in the mud, 150 yards from where his home once stood.

"It looked like a baby doll," said David Harmon, a firefighter who had already combed the field once looking for survivors. Then he checked for a pulse. "He was laying there motionless ... and he took a breath of air and started crying."

The field had already been combed once for survivors, and finding anyone alive seemed improbable. Hours after the storm, there was devastation everywhere: The body of the boy's mother was found in the same field, houses were wiped to concrete slabs and a brick post office was blown to bits. But except for a few scrapes, Kyson was fine.

At a makeshift shelter for storm victims at Hartsville Pike Church of Christ in nearby Gallatin, the Rev. Doyle Farris said the child was a reminder that people "should never give up, even in the midst of the worst storm."

"If you look, you can find an inspiration or a bright spot," he said. "The child will always be a reminder in this community of that message."

Kyson's story emerged as a tale of hope amid spectacular misery as residents in Tennessee, Kentucky, Mississippi, Alabama and Arkansas tried to piece their lives back together after the nation's deadliest twister rampage in two decades killed 59 people.

The extent of the damage was still being tallied Thursday, two days after the storms.

Federal and state emergency teams dashed into the hardest-hit areas, along with utility workers and insurance claims representatives. President Bush, who said he called the governors of the affected states to offer support, planned to visit Tennessee on Friday.

ACROSS THE NATION

Dozens injured in Georgia refinery blast

PORT WENTWORTH, Ga. (AP)—An explosion and fire at a sprawling sugar refinery rattled this Savannah suburb Thursday night, severely injuring dozens of people and sending authorities into a nearby river to search for possible victims, officials said. No deaths were immediately reported in the blast, which a company official said was probably caused by sugar dust. Ninety-five to 100 people were believed to be working in the area of the blast, and six were unaccounted for, said Chief Michael Berkow of the Savannah-Chatham County police. At least 40 people were taken to hospitals, and eight of them were flown to a burn center in Augusta, 130 miles up the Savannah River, he said.

Mob sweeps in NYC, Italy target Gambinos

NEW YORK (AP)—Authorities arrested dozens of people Thursday in a sweeping Mafia takedown aimed at closing the book on decades-old gangland killings and other crimes and knocking out what's left of the once-mighty Gambino family. A federal indictment in Brooklyn named 62 people, including the three highest-ranking members of the Gambino clan and the brother and nephew of the late John Gotti, the notorious boss who ran the family in its heyday. State prosecutors separately charged 26 others with running a gambling ring that took nearly $10 million in bets on professional and college sports. The raids coincided with an Italian operation centered on the Sicilian capital of Palermo, targeting Mafia figures.

Police: At least 5 dead in LA standoff

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A gunman killed three apparent relatives and a veteran SWAT officer and wounded another officer before police shot him to death early Thursday in a home that erupted in flames during a long standoff. A woman escaped near the end of the siege. Police Chief William Bratton said investigators going through the house afterward believed there may be an additional victim inside, so "we are even at this stage of the game not certain how many victims we have." Two other SWAT officers received minor fragment wounds in a barrage of gunfire, Bratton said. The unidentified gunman was killed about 11 hours after barricading himself in the house and telling police in a 911 call he had killed three relatives, police said.

Suspect in Ohio school stabbing dies

PORTSMOUTH, Ohio (AP)—A man charged into a school where his estranged wife was a teacher Thursday morning, firing a gun before stabbing her as her fifth-grade class watched, police said. He later was found dead in his home after apparently shooting himself during a standoff with police. The teacher, Christi Layne, underwent surgery and "should be fine," her lawyer told The Columbus Dispatch. Personnel at Cabell Hospital in Huntington, W.Va., where she being treated, would not release her condition Thursday night. Police originally said William Michael Layne shot his wife at Notre Dame Elementary, but Chief Charles Horner said it was unclear whether a gunshot fired in the school hit her.

Asia

Nepal nabs suspect in India kidney ring

KATMANDU, Nepal (AP)—A fugitive doctor accused of running a shadowy organ transplant operation in India that illegally removed hundreds of kidneys—in some cases from unwilling donors—has been arrested in southern Nepal, an official said Friday.

Nepalese police detained Amit Kumar at a jungle resort in Chitwan—100 miles south of the capital Katmandu—Thursday night, said local police chief Kiran Gautam.

He is the alleged mastermind behind the illegal organ-trade operation based in Gurgaon, an upscale New Delhi suburb. Indian police believe up to 500 kidneys were sold to clients who traveled to India from around the world over the past nine years. Some unwilling donors were tricked and held at gunpoint before their organs were harvested.

Kumar was being transferred to Katmandu on Friday for further investigation. He was found with $230,000 in cash and a check for $24,000.

Kumar, who has several aliases, has been accused in past organ transplant schemes elsewhere in India. Authorities said last month they believed he fled the country.

Nepalese police were able to identify Kumar because his photographs had been published in newspapers and broadcast on Indian television channels viewed in Nepal, Gautam said.

2 suspects arrested in Bhutto killing

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (AP)—Police arrested two more suspects Thursday in the suicide attack that killed opposition leader Benazir Bhutto, and thousands of her followers gathered at her tomb to mark the end of mourning for her and launch her party's campaign for this month's parliamentary election.

Interior Ministry spokesman Javed Iqbal Cheema said the two suspects were picked up in Rawalpindi, where Bhutto died in a gun and bomb attack Dec. 27. He declined to say whether the two men were key figures in the assassination, which threatened to plunge the nation into political chaos.

"I can't really comment on whether (the arrest) is important," Cheema told The Associated Press. "After the investigation, I will be in a position to say more."

Last month, police in northwestern Pakistan arrested two other suspects, including a 15-year-old boy who was alleged to have been part of a backup suicide squad assigned to kill Bhutto if the primary assassins failed.

The latest arrests were announced as a team of British detectives from Scotland Yard returned to Pakistan to report the findings of their investigation of the assassination. Their report is expected to shed light on exactly how Bhutto died - amid confusion over whether she was killed by a gunshot or the impact of a suicide bombing.

Retired generals turn on Musharraf

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (AP)—A group of retired Pakistani generals and admirals is stepping up its unprecedented campaign against President Pervez Musharraf, even joining in a public protest to demand that the former military chief resign.

The government has played down the role of retired military officers of the Ex-Servicemen's Association since last month, when they called on Musharraf to relinquish the presidency citing "the supreme national interest."

Some of the dissident officers, including former army chief Mirza Aslam Beg, staged a brief public rally Tuesday in Rawalpindi and demanded that Musharraf resign.

Some Pakistani analysts and Western diplomats believe the former generals, admirals and air marshals retain strong ties to their successors on active duty.

While the military leadership remains loyal to Musharraf, the protests by retired servicemen point to deep fissures within the armed forces, which have supported Musharraf since he seized power in a military coup in 1999.

Cashmere goats in India face starvation

SRINAGAR, India (AP)—More than 100,000 Himalayan goats—famed for their pashmina wool—or cashmere—face starvation after their desert habitat was blanketed with snow, while three people died during the region's worst storms in three decades, officials said Thursday.

The government was trying to get emergency supplies to the area as winter stocks of fodder ran out after rare snows covered pastures in the remote Ladakh region near the border with China, said Dr. Tsering Phuntsog, chief animal husbandry officer in the region.

"There is a strong possibility that many goats might perish if supplies don't reach them immediately," he said.

Nomads and Tibetan refugees herd the goats in the remote and barren area. Despite being high in the Himalayas, Ladakh usually gets almost no rain or snow.

AP

An elderly man belonging to the Chang-pa mountain tribe holds his Himalayan goat as his son cuts its horn that was hurting the animal's eye in Kharnak, some 185 kilometers (116 miles) from Leh, India, in this July 21, 2007 photo.

"This is the heaviest snowfall in the last three decades in the region. Being a cold desert, Ladakh usually receives about 10 centimeters (4 inches) of precipitation in a year, but this year about 2 feet of snow has accumulated," said M.K. Bhandari, a local government official.

World

Nighttime curfew across Chad

N'DJAMENA, Chad (AP)—The government imposed a dusk-to-dawn curfew Thursday across Chad and said it was scouring the capital for coup plotters and their accomplices who were in hiding after days of fighting killed hundreds and caused thousands to flee.

President Idriss Deby called for the swift deployment of a European peacekeeping force whose arrival was delayed by the fighting. The European troops would guard nearly a half million refugees and Chadians displaced by violence in neighboring Sudan's war-ravaged Darfur region.

Prime Minister Nouradin Koumakoye announced the curfew a day after Deby insisted the government had total control of the country following a weekend coup attempt that brought rebels to the gates of the presidential palace. Soldiers forced the rebels out of the city Sunday.

Koumakoye told reporters the 6:30 p.m.-to-6 a.m. curfew was necessary to "restore calm in the country and deal with the damage done by the Sudanese army."

Oil-rich Chad has repeatedly said neighboring Sudan is backing the rebels to try to prevent the European peacekeepers from deploying. Sudan has denied involvement, but has long resisted such a force.

Iran starts up advanced centrifuges

VIENNA, Austria (AP)—Iran's nuclear project has developed its own version of an advanced centrifuge to churn out enriched uranium much faster than its previous machines, diplomats and experts said Thursday.

They said that few of the IR-2 centrifuges were operating and that testing appeared to be in an early phase, with the new machines rotating without processing any uranium gas.

More significant, the officials said, is the fact that Iran appears to have used know-how and equipment bought on the nuclear black market in combination with domestic ingenuity to overcome daunting technical difficulties and create highly advanced centrifuges.

Iran's uranium enrichment work has raised concerns in Washington and other Western capitals because it can produce the radioactive material needed for nuclear bombs. Tehran says it is only pursuing lower-level enrichment to make fuel for atomic reactors that will generate electricity.

Iran is under two sets of U.N. Security Council sanctions for refusing to suspend uranium enrichment, which it started developing during nearly two decades of covert nuclear activity built on illicit purchases and revealed only five years ago.

US threatens to bar Kenyans over unrest

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP)—Washington is wielding a visa weapon against prominent Kenyans who have allegedly encouraged weeks of post-election bloodshed, threatening to bar politicians and businessmen from visiting the U.S., America's ambassador said Thursday.

Ambassador Michael Ranneberger said warnings already made to 10 people on all sides of Kenya's political divide had "hit a nerve" among the country's elite and he warned that more people could be targeted over suspicions they have been financing violence.

"There is money changing hands," Ranneberger said in an interview with foreign journalists. "People are paying 4,000 shillings ($60) to burn down a house."

Canada's ambassador, Ross Hynes, reportedly said Thursday that his country was already barring some Kenyans from entering, although he did not provide any names. Britain, Kenya's former colonial ruler, said it could take similar steps.

WORLD BRIEFS

Powerful Shiite cleric quiets in Iraq

BAGHDAD (AP)—Iraq's most influential Shiite cleric, Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, has sharply reduced his workload in recent months, raising new questions about the health of the aged leader and the prospect of a dangerous power vacuum without a clear and dominant successor. Any change in al-Sistani's role or reach could have far-reaching consequences for both Iraq and the United States, which consider the Iranian-born cleric as perhaps the most powerful figure in Iraq and a vital stabilizing force in the oil-rich Shiite heartlands of southern Iraq. The most worrisome scenario is that—as al-Sistani's vast clout possibly wanes—the majority Shiites could further splinter into factions that could rattle Iraq's Shiite-led government and boost militias openly hostile to Washington.

Archbishop: UK should allow Shariah

LONDON (AP)—The archbishop of Canterbury on Thursday called for a limited application of Islamic law in Britain. Muslims praised the proposal but the government rejected it. The unusual suggestion from Britain's highest ranking Christian leader would, if adopted, allow British Muslims to choose to resolve marital and financial disputes under Islamic law, known as Shariah, rather than through British courts. Archbishop Rowan Williams said in a radio interview with British Broadcasting Corp. that incorporating Islamic law could help improve Britain's flagging social cohesion.

Spain to make clothes for real women

MADRID, Spain (AP)—Some 10,000 volunteers have undergone laser beam zapping to measure their actual shape as part of a pioneering project for Spanish designers to make clothes that fit real women, officials said Thursday. The Health Ministry wants to standardize sizing, and it says retail chains including Zara already have signed on to follow the guidelines. A total of 10,415 women between the ages of 12 to 70 took part in the five-month study, standing in booths equipped with laser beams that measured their bodies from every imaginable angle in a matter of seconds, rendering a 3-D image.

FBI arrests man in 1983 militant robbery

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP)—A Puerto Rican militant suspected in a 1983 Connecticut robbery—among the country's largest cash heists at the time—was arrested Thursday in the U.S. territory, where he lived quietly under an assumed name, the FBI said. Avelino Gonzalez Claudio, 65, an alleged member of a Puerto Rican independence group, Los Macheteros, was captured while driving in the northern town of Manati, said Luis Fraticelli, the FBI special agent in charge of Puerto Rico. Gonzalez was among more than a dozen people indicted in the Sept. 12, 1983, robbery of about $7 million from a Wells Fargo armored car depot in West Hartford, Conn.

Maharlika – PinoyNews

'Abalos brokered NBN deal'

By VERONICA UY
INQUIRER.NET

MANILA—Rodolfo Lozada Jr., the key witness in the Senate inquiry into the national broadband network controversy, named former Commission on Elections chairman Benjamin Abalos Sr. as having brokered the telecommunications contract that was forged with China's ZTE Corp.

Lozada

Lozada, former technical consultant of the NBN project, said that Abalos wanted a $130 million commission from the agreement that would have connected all government agencies via the Internet.

Lozada also said that he met with First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo during a dinner with ZTE officials, along with Abalos and Neri.

Testifying before the Senate for the first time, Lozada recalled how Abalos insisted on a loan package for the project instead of a build-operating-transfer scheme, which the former consultant said he and then socioeconomic planning secretary Romulo Neri had recommended.

Lozada said that when he refused to accede to Abalos' proposal, the former poll chief repeatedly threatened him.

Lozada said the last straw was on January 18 when on his way to Dumaguete City as part of his work as president of the Philippine Forest Corp, Abalos called him again and told him that he had contacts in the military and police.

Lozada alleged that after this, Abalos let loose a mouthful of cuss words of which he said he had had enough.

AP

A protester displays placards to show her support for Rodolfo Lozada Jr., unseen, a witness in a Senate corruption inquiry that has implicated President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's husband, during a rally outside the Philippine Senate Thursday Feb. 7, 2008, in Manila.

Canada eyes RP to fill manpower needs for next 10 years—POEA

By MARGAUX ORTIZ
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA—Canada will need close to two million skilled workers over the next 10 years and is looking at the Philippines as its main source of manpower, officials of the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration announced recently.

"We succeeded in bilateral negotiations with Canadian provinces late last year," POEA Administrator Rosalinda Dimapilis-Baldoz said at a press conference.

Baldoz said Canada will need 1.9 million skilled workers and professionals.

British Columbia, according to the POEA chief, will be hiring 22,000 to 24,000 temporary workers in preparation for the 2018 Winter Olympics.

Manitoba, on the other hand, will need more caregivers, nannies, and skilled workers such as pipe fitters and welders. "The same [type of] skilled workers will also be hired in the province of Alberta as maintenance managers and facility operators," Baldoz said.

Construction workers, meat processors, educators and researchers will be needed in Prince Edward Island.

"Private recruitment agencies will be handling the job orders from Canada," Baldoz said.

Baldoz had earlier said the global economic slowdown would have little effect on the number of Filipinos deployed abroad.

"Many highly industrialized countries have a shortage of skilled workers," Baldoz said, noting that the locals were not willing to take on "dirty, dangerous and difficult jobs such as welding and construction work."

Baldoz said these countries look to the Philippines to supply these skilled workers and keep their economies going.

"They still need us," Baldoz said.

Forex reserves surge to record $34.4B

By DORIS DUMLAO
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA—The Philippines' gross international reserves rose to a new record high of $34.4 billion at end-January from $33.8 billion at end-2007, fueled by sustained purchases of dollars by the central bank to curb the peso's rise against the dollar.

"The increase in reserves was attributed mainly to inflows from the [central bank's] net foreign exchange operations on the back of sustained foreign exchange inflows, as well as income from the BSP's investments abroad," said Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. of the central bank, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

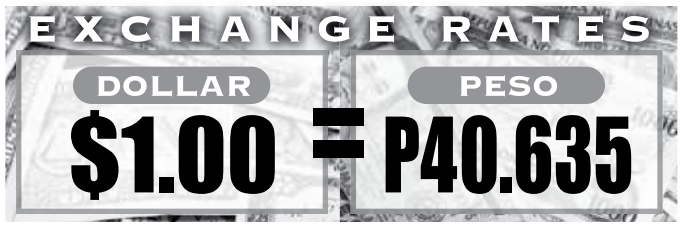
He said the inflows were partly offset by payments of maturing foreign obligations of the national government and the BSP itself.

The gross international reserves consist of the central bank's gross foreign currency holdings, gold reserves, foreign investments, and special drawing rights from the International Monetary Fund.

At its current level, Tetangco said the foreign reserves could cover five times the country's short-term foreign debt based on original maturity and 3.1 times based on residual maturity.

Net international reserves, including revaluation of reserve assets and reserve-related liabilities, climbed to $34.3 billion from an end-December level of $33.7 billion.

The BSP has increased buying dollars on the open market, given sustained inflows of foreign exchange from overseas Filipinos and foreign portfolio investors.



LABOR FRONT

The periodic exit requirement

By FERDIE P. DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Q: Who are those covered by the periodic exit requirement in Public Law 15-108, the new labor reform law?

A: Unless an exemption applies, the periodic exit requirement in P.L. 15-108 covers all employers in the CNMI who employ alien workers and all foreign national workers who are present in the Commonwealth.

According to the new Employment Rules and Regulations, on or before June 15 of each year, the employer shall e-mail to the address provided by Labor or file in writing with Labor Enforcement the names of employees who have exited or will exit during the calendar year. The Regulations say that this list may be amended at the end of any calendar quarter.

■ ■ ■

Q: Can an employer exempt an alien worker from the exit requirement?

A: According to the Employment Rules and Regulations, each employer with 10 or more employees may designate certain employees as key to the business and exempt them from the exit requirement. The Regulations state that this allows each business to determine for itself whether a worker has skills important to the continued success of the business. The exemption may not reach more than 10 percent of an employer's foreign national workers.

On or before March 15 of each year, the employer shall e-mail to the address provided by Labor or file in writing with Labor Enforcement the names of employees exempt from the periodic exit requirement. This list may be amended at the end of any calendar quarter. In any event, every employer shall be entitled to designate at least one foreign national worker as a key employee.

■ ■ ■

Q: What are the reasons given for imposing such periodic exits?

A: According to the Regulations, the periodic exit requirement serves two objectives that are important to the management of the CNMI's labor pool. The first reason cited is that such exit serves the objective of promoting employment opportunities for U.S. citizens and permanent residents.

The second reason given is that such exit "serves the objective of promoting enforcement, understanding and clarity with respect to the requirement that the status of guest workers does not change as a result of their work in the Commonwealth."

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'352 Filipinos in strife-torn Chad safe'

By CYNTHIA BALANA
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA—All 352 Filipinos in the Republic of Chad are safe from the strife in the African country, according to the Department of Foreign Affairs.

DFA Spokesperson Claro Cristobal, quoting a report from Philippine Ambassador to Tripoli Bayani Mangibin, said on Thursday that Filipinos were all registered workers employed by the firm Industrial Maintenance International (IMI) for a project in Chad.

"The IMI has assured the embassy that it has the means to evacuate all its workers from Chad should that be needed," Cristobal said.

Dozens of civilians have been wounded in fighting that began when rebels trying to oust President Idriss Deby entered the capital on Saturday.

The violence threatens peacekeeping and aid operations intended to stabilize a region that borders the war-ravaged Darfur region of Sudan.

Lozada alleges death threats by Abalos

By OLIVER TEVES
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—A witness in a Philippine Senate inquiry who implicated the president's husband in a corruption scandal said Thursday a former elections chief threatened to kill him if he failed to secure a huge kickback on a government contract.

Rodolfo Lozada Jr. was a government consultant for the US$330 million broadband contract with China's ZTE Corp. He told a news conference Thursday that Benjamin Abalos, a former elections chief who allegedly acted as a broker for the contract, threatened to kill him if Lozada didn't obtain a kickback for him by overpricing the contract by US$130 million.

Lozado was taken into police custody Tuesday at Manila's airport after he returned from a trip abroad, in what officials said was a move to protect his life. He was released late Wednesday and gave the press conference early Thursday.

Lozada has become a key witness in the scandal, which exploded last year when President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's husband, Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo, was implicated in the inquiry.

Jose de Venecia III, a losing bidder, told investigators Mike Arroyo had been promised a US$70 million kickback for approving the overpriced contract.

Abalos quit after the scandal broke last year and refused to comment on Lozada's claim that he issued death threats against him.

Arroyo has since canceled the controversial contract. Presidential spokesman Ignacio Bunye said Thursday she ordered the Justice Department to investigate "those who may be liable" for violating procurement and anti-graft laws.

Opposition senators believe Lozada may be the missing link in their effort to prove the president and her husband were involved in approving the deal.

Lozada was released after his wife, Violeta, filed a Supreme Court petition Wednesday seeking his freedom, claiming he was "kidnapped" by authorities to prevent him from testifying about the corruption scandal.

National police Chief Avelino Razon said Wednesday that Lozada was held at the request of a sibling who sought protective custody for him because "they fear for his safety." He did not say who was threatening Lozada, or who asked that he be placed under protection.

The Supreme Court ordered the president, Razon and other officials to respond to allegations by Lozada's family that authorities had held him against his will.

AP

Protesters display placards to show their support for Rodolfo Lozada Jr., unseen, a witness in a Senate corruption inquiry that has implicated President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's husband, during a rally outside the Philippine Senate Thursday Feb. 7, 2008, in Manila. Lozada said Thursday a former elections chief threatened to kill him if he tried to deny him a huge kickback on a government contract.

Abalos: What $130 million?

By KRISTINE L. ALAVE
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA—"I do not know what these people are trying to do to me," former Commission on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. said Thursday.

Abalos was reacting to testimony that he had demanded $130 million in kickbacks which swelled the cost of the government's $329-million National Broadband Network (NBN) deal with China's ZTE Corp.

He said he had not heard the allegations of Rodolfo Lozada Jr., a former consultant tapped by the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) to examine the project early last year. Lozada was the third person to point an accusing finger at Abalos, who resigned from his Comelec post when the scandal broke out last year.

In September, during the Senate hearings on the ZTE deal, businessman Jose de Venecia III and ex-NEDA Director General Romulo Neri said Abalos had pushed for the deal between the Philippine government and ZTE Corp.

Neri said Abalos had offered him P200 million in exchange for approving the ZTE proposal for the NBN project, which NEDA reviewed.

Waiting for copy

De Venecia told the Senate that Abalos had offered him $10 million to back out of the project.

"Please give me the privilege of getting first the copy of the tape," Abalos told reporters outside Wack Wack Golf and Country Club in Mandaluyong City after he played golf at around 11 a.m.

"I don't want to comment on something that was hearsay. I want to get it from the horse's mouth," he said, answering the media's questions from inside his silver SUV.

He returned shortly, however, and got out of the vehicle to face reporters.

Pressed to comment on Lozada's statement that he received a kickback of $130 million, Abalos said, "$130 million? You know how much that is?"

Abalos sought to discredit Lozada and raised doubts about the veracity of his statements.

'In the company of strangers for 24 hours'

By TARRA QUISMUNDO
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA—Sleepless, exhausted and terrified, Rodolfo Lozada Jr. said Thursday he was in the company of strangers throughout the almost 24 hours he was reported missing.

Finally returned to his family and friends since disappearing from the airport on Tuesday afternoon, Lozada said men who did not identify themselves picked him up at the airport and told him that his boss, Environment Secretary Lito Atienza, had sent for him.

"It was supposed to be my family" who was to meet him, Lozada, head of state-owned Philippine Forest Corp., said.

Amid the confusion, Lozada said, Atienza called and told him "not to be alarmed."

Asked if he felt he had been abducted at the time, Lozada said: "At a certain point, yes."

"I'd be a hypocrite if I say I did not get scared," said Lozada, his face pale as he squinted at flashing cameras and the glare of television lights.

AP

Rodolfo Lozada Jr, a witness in a Senate corruption inquiry that has implicated President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's husband, cries at a news conference in San Juan, east of Manila Thursday Feb. 7, 2008.

He believed the men were armed, but he felt "no explicit threat," rather "an implicit one because I did not know them."

Lozada said the men were "nice" when they asked him to sign affidavits that included a request for police security, a paper that would show consistency with the government's claim that he had asked for protection, and "an item [that said] I did not speak of the ZTE-NBN deal [with] any government official."

He felt that to say "under duress" was "too strong" a phrase to describe his situation when he signed the papers. Still, he apologized to the public for signing the documents and disavowed their contents.

"Please forgive me for signing those ... I signed them in their company," said Lozada with a slight smile.

Intercepted at tube

Flanked by priests and nuns at La Salle Green Hills' National Shrine of the Divine Child chapel during a news conference at 2:30 a.m., Lozada recounted how he was taken at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 1 (NAIA-1) on his arrival from Hong Kong at 4:40 p.m. on Tuesday.

His family had been worried that he had been kidnapped by state agents to stop him from testifying on the controversial $329-million National Broadband Network deal with China.

Lozada was due to testify in the Senate's inquiry into the deal when he flew to Hong Kong on Jan. 30. Lozada admitted he left to avoid the Senate blue ribbon committee hearing, saying he did not want his testimony to be tainted by politics.

"The instruction I got was to go straight to the Bureau of Immigration because I've always been concerned that I'd be arrested by the Senate. I was afraid," he said, referring to what his family had directed him to do on his return to Manila.

But the men intercepted him in the tube connecting his plane to the arrival gate, an area accessible only to airline staff and deplaning passengers. They did not identify themselves until Lozada was released to his family on Wednesday evening.

"I did not know the group who took me from the tube, so I guess that's where all the confusion started and I texted my brother that I was already taken by a group from the tube," Lozada said.

Calls for GMA to quit—anew; Palace says to wait for 2010

MANILA (Philippine Daily Inquirer)—Calls for President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to step down were again heard Thursday after a government official linked her husband to the alleged overprice in the National Broadband Network (NBN) contract with China's ZTE Corp.

Malacañang, however, promptly rejected the calls as it brushed aside Rodolfo Lozada Jr.'s allegations implicating First Gentleman Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo in the corruption scandal.

"If there's any more moral fiber left in GMA's body, she should resign now and allow the Filipino people to express their choice via a fresh mandate," Sen. Panfilo Lacson said on the eve of the resumption of the Senate inquiry into the $329-million deal.

Lozada, who is scheduled to testify at the Senate hearing on Friday, has been touted as the missing link in the effort to prove that Ms Arroyo and her husband were involved in the deal.

"A snap election may very well prevent a destabilization effort and, worse, an unconstitutional takeover by some interest groups," Lacson said in a text message to reporters.

Sen. Alan Peter Cayetano called on Ms Arroyo to take an indefinite leave of absence, saying this would give his blue ribbon committee wider latitude in investigating the scandal.

Even so, Senate President Manuel Villar expressed doubt Ms Arroyo would heed the senators' call considering how she has fought tooth and nail to stay in power and survived three attempts to impeach her in the past three years.

In Malacañang, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye told reporters that Lacson and Cayetano were merely out to bring down the administration because of their presidential ambitions.

Maharlika – PinoyStyle

Joyce dating someone older

By INQUIRER STAFF
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA—Sexy actress Joyce Jimenez has steered clear of suitors from show biz because, she told entertainment writers recently, she has learned her lesson.

Joyce could be referring to her highly publicized relationship with Jay Manalo in the mid-'90s. When they broke up, she said he had verbally and physically abused her.

"I'm exclusively dating someone," she said. "This just means that I don't date anyone else because I have not found anyone better yet."

Joyce described her special friend merely as "an officer... older than me, but not so much."

While waiting for a proposed movie project, she is focused on Private Joyce, her line of lingerie, cosmetics and scents. She has tied up with Ever Bilena Cosmetics Inc. to bring the line to the provinces. Joyce is a marketing graduate of the Griffith University in Gold Coast, Australia.

Sounds of silence

After all that huffing and puffing, le grand affair Greta-Tonyboy-Dodie was all but ignored on weekend's chismis shows.

Why the sudden conspiracy of silence?

Instead of tackling Gretchen Barretto's reconciliation with Tonyboy Cojuangco (and the apparent dumping of Dodie Puno), an undue amount of airtime was devoted to the Rufa Mae Quinto-Jessa Zaragoza verbal skirmish over Dingdong Avanzado—an issue that erupted eight years ago.

Actually, La Greta earned a few minutes on "TV Patrol Sunday," but it wasn't directly about her; it was more about Diether Ocampo denying that Kristine Hermosa was "dating" Tonyboy.

The TV report cited a Feb. 1 Rushes blind item. But wait, our story didn't say Tonyboy was "dating" the actress. We merely said he was "actively pursuing" her. Aha! For a change, a celebrity owned up!

Officially divorced?

We hear Ogie Alcasid's divorce has come through. Is this why we're also hearing renewed overtures about Ogie and Regine Velasquez tying the knot soon?

Melanie's book

Melanie Marquez visited Rushes recently. It was a pleasant surprise, times two: she was accompanied by 14-year-old daughter Maxine (whose dad is Derek Dee).

"She's gonna be in the limelight soon," Melanie enthused. Was the tall and pretty teen set to invade show biz?

"I'm trying to convince her to start a clothing line," the obviously doting mom said. "She's great at putting things together." Signature stuff?

"No, usually not," Melanie said. "We shop in Tutuban. We know Divisoria inside and out. What she is wearing today, she stylished herself!"

Oops.

Which reminded us, whatever happened to her book, "Melanisms"?

"I have only enough material for 80 printed pages," said MM, the unsinkable. "I'd like 100, at least."

That is, over her current husband's (an American lawyer) objections. "Ba't naman ako mahihiya, 'di ba?" Melanie said. "It's just fun."

Sexy actress Joyce Jimenez.

Good riddance

When ABS-CBN pirated a Young Director, his co-workers in GMA 7 allegedly heaved a sigh of relief.

"Good riddance was the general reaction among network insiders," claimed a source.

Turned out YD was just a pretty face and had little to offer in the directing department. His debut movie had crashed at the tills.

All-star flop

Big Boss scolded network officials over the dismal ratings of a prime time soap opera, according to a spy.

BB asked his underlings: How could that happen? Considering the network had pulled out all the stops!

The soap opera boasts an all-star lineup, award-winning actors, popular love teams, BB pointed out. "And that show costs as much as two movies combined," said an insider.

Where Jolens shops

Jolina made her first eBay purchase last year, a love charm. She was hooked. Now she is "style ambassador" for eBay.ph.

Needless to say, she's doing her Valentine shopping online (www.ebay.ph/catalogue). For boyfriend Bebong Muñoz, she's eyeing a vintage watch; for her mom and dad, bracelets; for her older sister, an Elmo tickle doll; and for her dog Cosmo, a new wardrobe.

What he eats...

...need not be public knowledge, says Victor Basa, who loves Chinese and Tex-Mex foodstuff (ugh, garlic and onions). Putting his money where his mouth is, the model-turned-actor/MTV veejay is the new endorser of the mouthwash brand, OraCare.

■■■

Top of the talk shows

For those who missed TV gabfests last weekend. (And why we are moved, if we are moved—and if you, readers, are moved, too, let us know. As in, now.)

■ Ian de Leon, on observations about his closeness with Diana Zubiri on the "Zaido" set: "Espesyal siyang tao... 'yung nasasabihan ng mga bagay na di mo nasasabi sa iba."

■ LJ Reyes, on news that exboyfriend Alfred Vargas is wooing a college friend: "Good for him." (Ay, parang galit yata.)

■ Paolo Paraiso, on choosing Katrina Halili as his Valentine date this year: "Sino bang lalaking hindi ma-a-attract kay Katrina? Wala naman siyang boyfriend; wala naman akong girlfriend." (Kung sabagay...)

■ Jessa Zaragoza on Rufa Mae Quinto's revelations about her failed relationship with Dingdong Avanzado in a magazine interview: "Puro kasinungalingan po 'yung sinasabi [niya] about me and Dingdong. Very deceiving eh. Maniniwala ka, lalo na kung ordinaryong tao ka. Napaka-unfair po kung di ko itutuwid."

■ Jessa, saying Rufa Mae was dating other men while in a relationship with Dingdong: "Ito ang katotohanan—hindi po masabi ni Dingdong kasi nga ... napaka-ungentleman kung sa kanya manggagaling. Nahuli siya ni Dingdong na may kasamang lalaki sa bahay. I won't name names pero ito, actor-politician na naging dyowa niya. In short, siya ang nanloko kay Dingdong. Hindi si Dingdong ang nanloko sa kanya. Kung ganitong klaseng babae, paano mo naman seseryosohin? Pa-paano mo masasabing girlfriend? So, kung hindi siya girlfriend, it means walang inagaw, walang inagawan, at wala akong sinirang relasyon." (Teka, teka, parang may mali sa time line. Pero kilala namin ang politician.)

■ Jessa, on Rufa Mae's past interview with "The Buzz" about her break-up with Dingdong: "Scripted 'yun eh. Tinext niya kami, sabi niya, humanda kayo... panoorin niyo ako sa 'The Buzz' at panoorin niyo kung ano ang gagawin ko. 'Yun nga 'yung time na umiyak-iyak siya... pinalabas niya na masama kami na ako, nang-agaw ako. At that time hindi ako makapagsalita kasi pinipigilan ako ng management ko. Pero now... hindi lang ako ang involved, ngayon involved na ang asawa ko... ang anak ko."

■ Jessa's message to Rufa Mae: "Pagsisisihan mo ito. Sinimulan mo ito, hindi kita uurungan." (Pasok, Dingdong! Dingdong?)

■ Rufa Mae, on Jessa saying that she (Rufa Mae) and Dingdong were not "on": "Eh di hindi." (Mwahahaha.)

■ Rufa Mae asked about dating other men while in a relationship with Dingdong: "Naiinis ako eh. Hanggang ngayon... umaapela-apela pa 'yan ha?"

■ Rufa Mae, on Jessa's comment that no man will take her seriously: "Salamat sa Diyos, hindi niya ako sineryoso, naku dahil hindi ko type na makatuluyan 'yan."

■ Rudy Fernandez, on a show biz comeback amid his battle with cancer: "Malapit na, palagay ko. 'Yun din ang pinagdadasal ko, na makapagtrabaho ulit. Nami-miss ko na." (Miss ka rin namin, Daboy!)

•Rhian Ramos, on her purported sex video with Richard Gutierrez: "Ha? Ano ba'ng maipapakita kong katawan para magka-video ako?"

Sources: From Startalk, The Buzz, Showbiz Central

PERSONAL FINANCE

When parents fall ill, how to help

Question: My dad has recently been diagnosed with cancer. He has been working for a long time in sales but my mom is a housewife. As I am my parents' only child, I found myself taking charge while they handle my father's illness. I have a good job as a call center agent but I know my salary won't be enough. I don't know if my parents have saved up well over the years and if they have enough for the cost of my dad's treatment. How can I find this out without hurting their feelings? – Andrew I.

Answer: This looks like a difficult time for you, Andrew. Having someone in the family diagnosed with cancer is tough. And being an only child, you are in a tougher situation.

But don't get discouraged.

The first thing you must do is to sit down with your parents and have a family conference. Tell them that you understand how difficult this time is, but that you all need to talk as a family to plan out a strategy to pay for your father's treatment. Assure them that you are there to help them keep their finances in order.

Below are the things you must look into and discuss with your parents:

HEALTH INSURANCE

Does your father have health insurance? Most employers offer health insurance as a benefit to their employees. If your father is covered by one, read the policy, including the fine print. Find out what costs are covered: Are checkups, medicines and treatments covered? Or is the insurance for hospitalization expenses only? How do you make a claim?

To get more information on how much your father is entitled to, read his company's employee manual.

Your father is also covered by the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (Philhealth) and the Social Security System (SSS), regardless of whether he has a separate private health insurance. Philhealth will cover hospitalization costs, including professional fees of doctors. SSS offers a sickness benefit. Read all about these in their websites: www.philhealth.gov.ph and www.sss.gov.ph.

LIFE INSURANCE

Ask your father if he has a life insurance policy. If so, request that you go over the policy. Some life insurance policies have a disability or hospitalization insurance bundled in. Find out if this is the case, and if so, ask the insurance company how you can make a claim.

While your father may still be receiving out-patient care, there may be a time in the future when he may need in-patient care at the hospital. This is the reason why you need to study his insurance policies.

INVESTMENTS IN PROPERTIES, LIQUID ASSETS

Your parents may have already been advised by the doctor how much the treatment program may cost. Since cancer can be very invasive, treatment programs may run up to more than a million pesos. Ask your parents if they have enough funds saved up to cover these expenses.

Aside from their bank accounts, they should tell you if they have other investments in the form of equity shares, bonds, real estate property and such other investments. In case their liquid assets won't be enough to cover the cost of the treatment, suggest that they sell off some assets this early. Real estate property, for instance, takes a long time to sell.

While you're talking about it, find out if their bank accounts and investments are made out in both their names (joint account). This is ideal, since your mother will be able to withdraw funds in case your father is hospitalized.

If their funds are only in your father's name, ask your father if he wants to have a power of attorney done. This will give your mother or you the authority to withdraw funds or manage his assets should he be very sick and not able to handle them.

WILL

Your father can consider whether he should make a will, in case he hasn't made one yet. No, this is not a sign that his death is imminent. Financial experts advise breadwinners to make out a will and have this ready at all times. With a will, your father will have the choice whom to bequeath his property, and what should be done about it.

Another form of will is the "living will." It is also called an advance health directive. It specifies what health option the person wants to be done should he be unable to decide (e.g., goes into a coma). Would a person want to be resuscitated or put on life support? These are delicate matters and it would be best if the person himself would be given a chance to decide on them.

YOUR SHARE

Given that you are still young, you may not have amassed a substantial amount of your savings yet. However, if you see that your parents won't be able to pay for the entire cost of treatment, find out how you can help.

Maybe you can shoulder the cost of medicines or the professional fees of doctors? Any help you can extend will be greatly beneficial.

Do your research too, as some organizations may be able to help your father. We also suggest that you do a survey of hospitals and find out where your father can avail of treatment at a lower cost.

In the light of all these, we also advise you to have your own finances in order. Get adequate health and life insurance coverage. Save diligently and invest your savings wisely. If you do these, someday you will be adequately prepared for whatever may come your way.

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Maharlika – Opinyon

EDITORIAL

Believing Lozada

The dramatic reappearance of Rodolfo Noel Lozada Jr. at the La Salle Greenhills school early Wednesday morning, surrounded by a phalanx of nuns, did not only stir many from their sleep, it also awakened the ghost of ZTE past.

Malacañang immediately denounced the monster it saw in its mirror, the ghost of personal agenda. Various Palace spokespersons called the Senate witness on the ZTE scandal a liar, and his emotional press conference a tissue of convenient lies.

Does anyone in Malacañang actually think there was anything convenient in the course Lozada chose? It would have been convenient for Lozada to disown the first affidavit he had signed and then keep a studied silence about the government deal with China's ZTE Corp. to build a national broadband network. That he obviously agonized over coming out in the open (even to the point of courting a contempt citation from the Senate), that he obviously took elaborate measures to ensure that his meeting with the media would be held in relative safety (with the help of the Catholic Church), that he obviously thought getting out his message to the media at the earliest possible time was a form of protection he could not avoid (hence the 2:30 a.m. news briefing)—all these suggest that Lozada in fact chose the more difficult course, the option of maximum inconvenience.

What does a man like Lozada, who is not independently wealthy, who holds no political power, stand to gain from taking on Malacañang?

Make no mistake: While Lozada has been careful to limit his statements to the corrupt brokering of Benjamin Abalos, the former chair of the Commission on Elections, and the possible involvement in the ZTE controversy of Jose Miguel Arroyo, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's husband, Malacañang has responded as though the President's very survival is at stake.

Hence, the many attempts at intimidation, including the surprising motion to cite Lozada for contempt filed by administration ally Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile. Hence, the many attempts at coercion, including the use of armed men to illegally escort him directly off the plane and out of the airport. Hence, the many attempts at manipulation, including the offer and the opportunity to sign a second affidavit while he was under police custody.

It is striking that Lozada took pains to give a nuanced explanation for signing that second affidavit. Asked whether he signed it under duress, he said the word was inaccurate. While it was clear from his narration of events that he signed the second affidavit against his best interests, he pointed out that it was his decision to sign it. Why? Perhaps to buy time, perhaps to buy the trust of his custodians; we don't know. Saying he never wanted to sign it, he then asked the public to forgive him for this lapse in judgment.

This is not the behavior of a liar or of someone driven by a political agenda. That he did not choose the path of least resistance tells us he is, in the main, telling the country the truth.

In contrast, we have heard nothing from the administration except transparent attempts at being economical with the truth.

2008 Philippine Daily Inquirer

AT LARGE

An ant and the elephants

By RINA JIMENEZ-DAVID
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

It's just one of many ironies that Jun Lozada, who had feared for months that he would be summoned to testify before the Senate, and who, when he was indeed called to appear before a hearing, chose to fly abroad to elude arrest, is now voluntarily under Senate custody.

But this only because a posse of police picked him up soon after his plane from Hong Kong landed and, exiting through the tube onto the tarmac (triggering unpleasant recollections for anyone who was alive when Ninoy Aquino was assassinated on the tarmac), then brought him on a long drive through the countryside.

"I would be lying if I said I was never afraid," he told reporters who wanted to know how he felt during that drive shared with total strangers. And as he tells it, it was only after his wife had raised a ruckus about his disappearance, and his whereabouts became the focus of fervid media attention, did the drive come to an end, and he was brought to La Salle Greenhills where he sought shelter among the good brothers.

But it was obvious during his dawn press conference that Lozada was still gripped by fear. He nearly broke down in tears as he tried to explain why he was speaking out, even if it meant risking his life.

For nearly a year, despite what he knew about the negotiations behind the government deal with China's ZTE Corp. to build a national broadband network (NBN), Lozada had kept his silence. He said he didn't want to be paraded before a "political" exercise like a Senate hearing, because he knew he wouldn't be able to lie, implying that if he did tell the truth, he would find himself in trouble. And indeed, since his name surfaced as a possible witness, he claimed to have received several death threats.

And so, after striving to remain a loyal factotum, content to carry out his duties in a "small" government corporation, Lozada found himself seeking succor from a motley group of government critics: church people, the Black and White Movement, and even the media.

He had landed in the limelight he had so assiduously avoided.

■ ■ ■

It's easy enough to speculate what could have happened if agents of what Lozada called "the dark side of the State" had not spirited him away from the airport.

Would he have been so frank and forthright as he was that early Thursday morning? Would he have been able to win the public's sympathy—or at least the segment of the public that had stayed up to watch the press con or its reruns—with his pained confession?

The Black and White Movement has described Lozada as a "hero." And while heroism has not so much been thrust on him as that he fell into the role, one must still acknowledge the courage he mustered to finally break his silence. He strikes me more as an unwitting victim, a low-key bureaucrat who sought to carry out his duties as best he could at the behest of a colleague and friend, then found himself caught in the middle of major contending forces.

"Moderate the greed," he was ordered, only to discover to his chagrin that under this regime, "the greed"—for money and power—knows no bounds.

■ ■ ■

Lozada's revelations are of a pair with the "valedictory" delivered by former House speaker Joe de Venecia on Monday. In fact, the ouster of "Manong Joe" [Elder Brother Joe] seems only to confirm testimony on the involvement of the First Gentleman in the anomalous ZTE-NBN negotiations. If De Venecia's son Joey, the losing bidder, was telling outright lies, then it should have been easy enough for the truth to emerge. Why the need to punish Joey's father and thereby stir the political pot?

What Joe de V denounced as corruption in high places in his speech, Lozada has confirmed, with his testimony of a stormy dinner with the Chinese negotiators attended by the First Gentleman. Malacañang officials may claim the public is "sick and tired" of the ZTE controversy, since the deal has been scuttled. But if it has found new life now, then Malacañang has only itself to blame. If it hadn't been so eager to kick Joe de Venecia out of the House, and if security escorts had not picked up Lozada at the airport, perhaps we would indeed have forgotten all about the aborted billion-peso project. But now it is top-of-mind again, and perhaps the muck will spread even higher through the rungs of government, instead of stopping at the level of the chairman of the Commission on Elections turned dealmaker.

■ ■ ■

As he sits in his room at the Senate, waiting to recover the energy he needs to survive what promises to be a grueling hearing, Lozada must be wondering how he ended up where he is, a place he had so assiduously tried to avoid.

But he knows that the Senate provides him about the only sanctuary still available. He certainly cannot be sure of his safety under police or military custody, and he knows his home is being watched. Perhaps the only alternative for him right now is the archbishop's residence, and even then he would still need to rely on police to stand guard.

Finding himself in the protective arms of senators he had tried to elude, Lozada surely appreciates the irony of his situation. But it is also an object lesson on the perils that await the humble, hardworking bureaucrat who abjures partisan politics but finds himself trying to referee a dispute between contending forces. As the saying goes, "When elephants dance, the ants get trampled on."

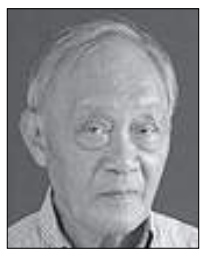
He might have thought he had a good chance of surviving amid the dancing legs of angry, greedy elephants, but Lozada must be telling himself now that the next time the elephants choose to hit the dance floor, wisdom dictates that ants like him get out of the way.

Life is unkind to ants that happen to annoy elephants.

Arroyo to pay heavy price for ouster of De Venecia

ANALYSIS

By AMANDO DORONILA
Philippine Daily Inquirer



Cracks in the administration's Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats, the majority coalition that has controlled the House of Representatives for two decades, appear to sunder the monolithic alliance, as the chamber faces a possible vote to unseat Speaker Jose de Venecia and end his 12-year leadership.

The charge is being led by Davao City Rep. Prospero Nograles, whose group claims to have lined up the signatures of 138 congressmen on a manifesto initiated by Kampi (Kabalikat ng Malayang Pilipino)—the other main pillar of the majority coalition—demanding change in the House leadership.

Nograles' bid is the first serious threat to De Venecia's grip on the speakership. De Venecia is defiant. He wants a plenary vote of warm bodies, not just signatures, to prove his rival has more than the 121 votes needed to unseat him.

Last July, De Venecia faced down a bid to depose him from Rep. Pablo Garcia of Cebu, who failed to muster the needed numbers.

Monday's possible vote, unless averted, presents the explosive ingredients to spark the disintegration of the majority that has protected President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo from three impeachment attempts since the 2004 presidential election.

The coalition is seething with tensions generated by the alleged involvement of Ms Arroyo's husband, Jose Miguel Arroyo, in the now-canceled $329-million National Broadband Network project with China's ZTE Corp., and the bribery allegations made by Jose "Joey" de Venecia III, the Speaker's son, who had also vied for the project.

Clash of dynasties

The competing interests of the First Gentleman and the Speaker's son in the project have led to clashes between the two leading and most powerful political dynasties in the country. The clashes are believed to be at the heart of the moves to unseat the Speaker.

Presidential intervention or nonintervention in the bid of Nograles to oust De Venecia is crucial to its success or collapse.

It is significant that two of the President's sons, Pampanga Rep. Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo and Camarines Sur Rep. Diosdado "Dato" Arroyo, have signed the manifesto initiated by Kampi—the President's own party in alliance with Lakas of De Venecia—expressing loss of confidence in the Speaker.

Ms Arroyo is not stopping her sons from pushing the manifesto, claiming (according to Secretary Cerge Remonde) that they had "the right to speak as congressmen, the same way Joey de Venecia can't be stopped by his father" from further testifying at the Senate on the ZTE deal.

This has created a family-driven standoff and feud that now threatens the breakup of the majority coalition in the House.

Signal from Palace

When Ms Arroyo refuses to hold back her sons from pushing the manifesto, for whatever reason, that neutrality speaks volumes of her lack of enthusiasm for the retention of the speakership by De Venecia.

De Venecia is in trouble despite his claim that Ms Arroyo had assured him of her support in a meeting with her on Thursday.

On the contrary, the Palace disclaimer of the President's hands-off attitude has emboldened Ms Arroyo's sons and Nograles' supporters to claim that it was a signal for them to go ahead with their campaign to unseat De Venecia.

President has last word

In the history of the fight for speakership in the Philippine legislature, the President has the last word in who stays as speaker. She makes or unmakes the Speaker. She and her family have been wounded by the feud with the De Venecias over the ZTE affair. This is the element that will decide the fate of the Speaker.

Remonde's statement denying knowledge of the agreement between the President and the Speaker on Thursday ("We, in Malacañang, observe the policy that we don't meddle in the internal affairs of the House of Representatives") cannot be taken at face value.

Imminent beheading

It is ominous for De Venecia that the mechanism for his beheading has already been put in place.

The 21-member Liberal Party has declared support for Nograles in his efforts to seek reforms in the House. The LP is one of the parties forming the majority coalition.

Camarines Sur Rep. Luis Villafuerte, Kampi president, said the LP decision had made unstoppable the campaign to unseat De Venecia. He said that all the parties were united behind Kampi's campaign.

Villafuerte said the Nationalist People's Coalition, the Nacionalista Party, and half of the party-list representatives had joined Kampi in expressing loss of confidence in the Speaker.

Price to pay

The removal of De Venecia puts the future of Lakas in doubt as the cornerstone of the majority coalition. The administration is bound to pay a heavy price from the fallout.

The fallout is likely to be more damaging to Lakas and the administration than to De Venecia.

The administration would not lose so much as a valuable ally in its bid to muster congressional support to overcome political crises. Rather, it would earn an enemy that could inflict heavy political damage stemming from De Venecia's son's continuing exposes on the ZTE scandal.

They know too much

With the information they hold about the ZTE controversy, the De Venecias, as a political enemy, can hold the administration hostage in a balance of terror.

The removal of De Venecia could trigger an extensive realignment of the majority coalition in the House. It could mark the breakup of Lakas as the centerpiece of the coalition.

Maharlika – Samu't Sari

FIRST ANNIVERSARY

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

CNMI POWER volunteers clean up the Garapan Elementary School/MIHA Housing area on Feb. 2, 2008, marking the first year anniversary of CNMI POWER's adoption of the area for its Sunday cleanups. Organization president Ladyvir Canape extends her gratitude to the untiring members of the group and to its supporters/donors. "We look forward to another year of service for the community," she said. CNMI POWER has been cleaning that neighborhood once a month for 13 months now.

HAPPY BiRTHDAY

Northern Marianas Badminton Federation's Diane Dar Juan celebrated her birthday with a barbecue potluck party thrown by the club last Feb. 2 at the Dandan residence of Ed and Juliet Ramos. Happy birthday from your NMBF family.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

BIRTHDAY GIRL

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Maria Fayme Atoigue celebrates her 2nd birthday with her parents, Frankie and Maurene Atoigue in Serena Restaurant at the former Nikko Hotel (now Palms Resort Saipan) on Jan. 28, 2008.

PIZZA PARTY

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Well Being Team manager Michelle Lee, third from left, throws a pizza party for Lamer, Spaness and Nail Tor staff members "as a token of appreciation for a job well done."

MLK DAY CLEANUP

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Educators Ron Hodges and Jaime Vergara join some organizers and supporters of the Dec. 7 Unity March during their cleanup at the American Memorial Park to honor Martin Luther King Jr.'s memory. The Dekada Movement and Human Dignity Movement are planning to adopt the national park by conducting beautification activities at least once a month.

BON VOYAGE

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Telesource CNMI accountant Ia Vilar will be saying goodbye to the islands today after making Saipan her home the past 10 years. She will be migrating to Melbourne, Australia. Vilar is seen here with friends from the Marianas Institute Filipino CPAs and Accountants, where she was a former officer and active member.

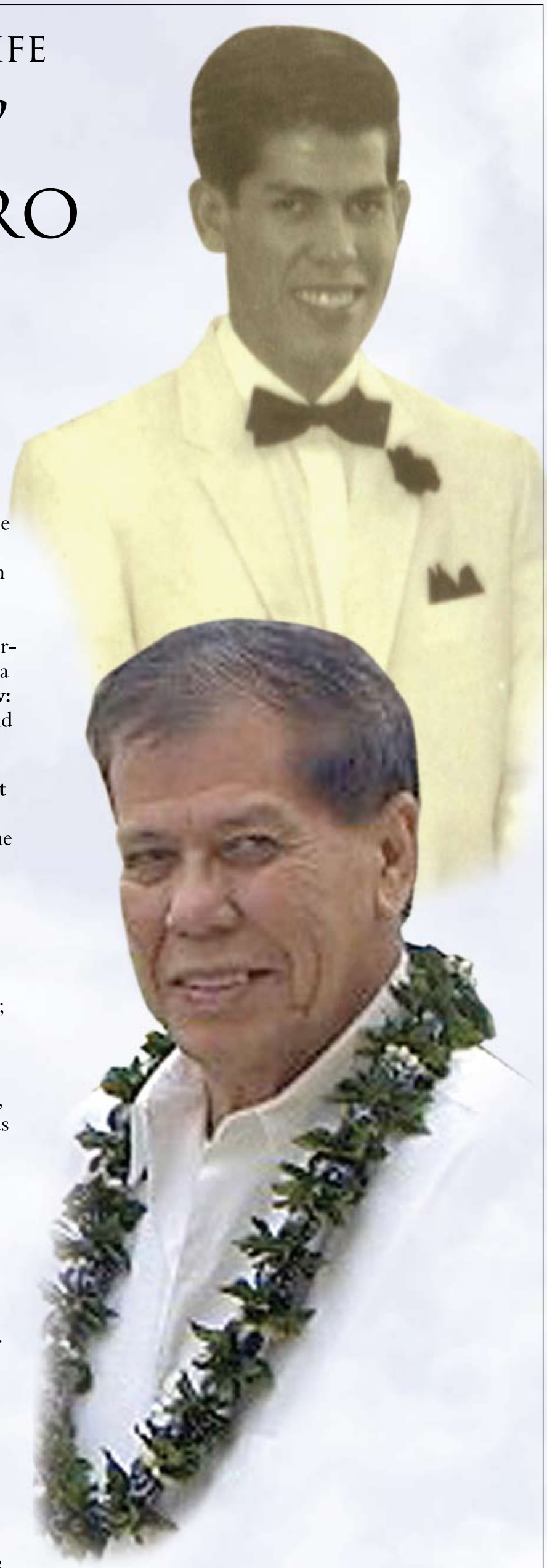
MR. WONDERFUL TURNS 1

Happy anniversary greetings to Club Mr. Wonderful in As Lito Road, which is marking its first anniversary today. The club will celebrate the occasion with a band and free chasers for all customers.

In Celebration of His New Life

John "Manuel" Deleon Guerrero Pangelinan

fondly known as "Ne and JP"



October 26, 1937 – February 5, 2008
of Saipan (formerly of Guam) was called
to his eternal rest on Tuesday, February 5, 2008 at the age of 70

In his passing, he now joins:
Wife: Dolores Perez Pangelinan **Children:** Joseph Pangelinan; Doris Marie Pangelinan; Joseph Pangelinan; Joseph Pangelinan; John Pangelinan; **Grandchild:** Dulcenea Maria Pangelinan; **Parents:** Angelina Diaz Deleon Guerrero & Joaquin Sablan Pangelinan; Magdalena Terlaje Pangelinan; **Parents-in-law:** Salvador Sr. & Hattie Kaihemakawalu Mamae Perez; **Sister:** Margaret Pangelinan Flores Kintol; **Brothers:** Gonzalo Deleon Guerrero Pangelinan; Alejo Aldan & Jesus Aldan; **Brothers-in-law:** Edward Ada Flores, Herman Kintol, Gilbert Ada & Dr. Jose Villagomez. **Sisters- in-law:** Ramona Perez & Evangeline Hartley; **Brothers-in-law & Spouse:** Reginald Charles Perez; Salvador Jr. & Concepcion San Nicolas Perez.

He will be forever missed but fond memories and his peaceful spirit will be lovingly treasured and remain in the hearts of his:
Children and Grandchildren: Donna Angelina Pangelinan; Lisa Christine Pangelinan (Jared); John J. & Gina Fejarang-Pangelinan (Audora, Joaquin, Angelina and Audreana); Jay Mitchell & Jennifer Contreras-Pangelinan (Alexandra, Ryan and Aubree); Jennifer Lynn Pangelinan ; Christie Leigh Sablan **Reared Son:** Edward Pangelinan Flores.

Brothers/Sisters and Spouses: Isabel & Segundo Duenas; Selina Stein; Rita Villagomez; Sophia & Pedro Tenorio; Herman & Christie Pangelinan; Gordon (Gonzalo) & Alice Pangelinan; Evelyn & Gregorio Calvo; Faustina Ada; Felix Torres; Geri Aldan.

Lifelong Family Friends: Siu Lin Tan & Pek Kim Lam Tan; Henry Tan, Willie Tan, Lily Chou, Raymond Tan, Jerry Tan, Sunny Tan and numerous other nephews and nieces, cousins and close friends.

Mass of Intentions is offered daily at 6:00 AM at Mt. Carmel Cathedral with the Holy Rosary prayed at 6:30 PM at the Residence of Rita P. Villagomez – As Lito, Saipan.

On Tuesday, February 12, 2008, his remains will be escorted from Borja Funeral Home to Mt. Carmel Cathedral at 9:00 AM. Visitation will start at 10:00 AM. Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 11:00 AM.

On Wednesday, February 13, 2008, his remains will be escorted to Saipan International Airport at 1:00 PM for departure to California for interment services. Upon his arrival in California, his remains will be escorted to Holy Cross Mortuary in Culver City, CA.

Viewing and last respects will be held on Friday, February 15, 2008 at Holy Cross Mortuary in Culver City, CA.

Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated on Saturday, February 16, 2008 at American Martyrs Catholic Church in Manhattan Beach, CA at 10:00 AM.
Burial will follow at Holy Cross Catholic Cemetery in Culver City, CA.

Youngstyle

For students in need of direction: Go fish!

WASHINGTON—There is something positively fishy going on at Oakwood School in Annandale, Va.

Students are really nice to each other, even if no adult is around. They listen politely when the teacher is talking. Sometimes a student will walk into a classroom, pump a fist in the air and yell "School rocks!"

The positive attitude is part of the school's commitment to the Fish! philosophy, a way of thinking and acting toward others that got its name from the fish wharves in Seattle, where the program began.

A filmmaker saw how upbeat the fish sellers were, even in their smelly surroundings, and made a movie about how their outlook helped them through tough 12-hour shifts. The fish dealers try to make each workday more pleasant by helping others, playing games, keeping a positive attitude and paying attention to everyone who comes into the fish market.

Oakwood is a private school for students ages 5 to 14 who have difficulty learning the way most kids do. Many Oakwood students had a tough time keeping up at other schools. Some were bullied because of their differences; others wouldn't raise their hands in class to answer questions.

Fish! helps the students find ways to enjoy being in school—and succeed.

While the entire school knows about Fish!, Cassidy McGowan and Sandra Sweeney's class of 9- and 10-year-olds really embraces it. Once a week they have an activity related to Fish!

One such activity has the kids look at an unfortunate situation and try to see the bright side. This helps students learn how to be positive in any situation.

"You can choose ... your attitude ... wherever you are, anywhere. It's your choice," says student Alec Singer.

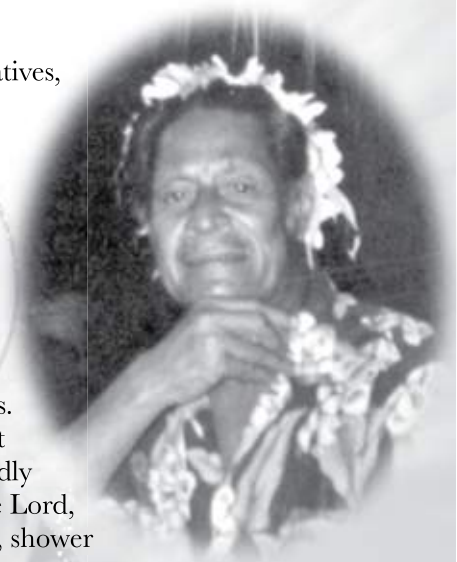
Not surprisingly, the kids' favorite part of Fish! is playtime. In one game that the class likes, students toss a toy Nemo fish back and forth while calling out each other's names. The tossing becomes faster and faster while the students try not to drop the fish.

Message of Appreciation

We, the family of the late

†Enrique Musuk Kapileo

better known as 'Tata Bubu'



wholeheartedly extend our sincerest appreciation and gratitude to all our relatives, friends, co-workers and acquaintances who prayed, offered condolences and supported us throughout our sorrow upon the loss of our dearest and loving father, grandfather, and in which gave us strength and courage to endure our trying times.

So many people have come forward with acts of kindness to ease our burdens. Every word and every gesture of support for us during this time of loss will be fondly remembered. Inn return, we ask that the Lord, who cannot be outdone in his generosity, shower His blessing upon you.

We extend our special thanks to Bishop Tomas A. Camacho, Fr. Jesse Reyes, Fr. Charley Borja, and the altar servers of St. Jude Parish Church who assisted in the Eucharistic Celebration.

God Bless You All!
Thank you, Gilisow, Salamat Po
and Si Yu'us Ma'ase.

From the Bubu Family

1st Year Death Anniversary

We, the children of

†Rosalia Tydingco Salas Concepcion

"Liang Max"
February 03-11, 2008

would like to invite all our relatives and friends, to join us in Eucharistic Celebrations as we commemorate the first anniversary of our beloved mother's passing into eternal life.

Mass of Intention and Rosary will be celebrated daily at 6:00 p.m. beginning on Sunday, February 3, 2008 at San Vicente Church.

Your presence, thoughts and prayers are greatly appreciated.

The Family

Death & Funeral Announcement

†Jesus Barcinas Agulto

April 11, 1941 – February 5, 2008

In his new Life he now joins his:
Daughter: Katherine Agulto DLGuerrero
Grandson: Alvin Agulto DLGuerrero
Parents: Thomas C./Ana B. Agulto
Parents-in-law: Jose H./Maria A. Masga
Brother: Pedro B. Agulto
Sister: Maria B. Agulto
Brother-in-law: Francisco A. Masga
Sister-in-law: Francisca M. Reyes

His spirit and memories will live forever in the hearts of his:
Wife: Dolores Masga Agulto
Children and Families:
MaryAnn A. & Edward Flores (Audrea F./Titus Omar (Edward Anthony, DeidreAnn),
Argernon F./Bonnie Mendiola (Madilynn Rose), April, Austin)
Joseph M. & Frances Agulto (Jesse, Thomas, Alice)
Clarissa A. & Vincent Torres (Margo, Rosannie, Vanavie, Chelsey, Camille, Kimberly, Vincent, Beng Beng, VJ)
Eleanor A. & Jesse Aguon (Jesse Jr., Keilani)
Aileen A. & Peter Camacho (Peter Jr., Kiana, Katherine)
Gerald M. Agulto & Evelyn Mu-a (Gerald Jr., Thomas, Justin, Cherisse)
Shirley A. & Jesse Tenorio (Kateleen, Jesse Jr.)
Ernestina A. & Joe Magofna (Joseph Jude)
Zeno C. DLGuerrero & Tina Sakisat (Crystal, Tasha, Zeno Jr.)

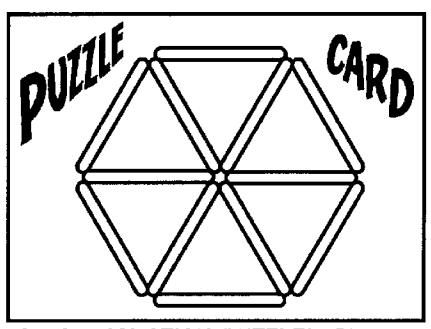
Sisters/Brothers/In-laws:
Dolores & Eloy S. Inos and children
Jose B. Agulto/Francine Agulto and children
Modesta A./Pedro Bartolo and children
Jesus A. Masga and family

He is additionally survived by numerous uncles, aunts, cousins, nephews, nieces and godchildren.

Daily Mass of intention is celebrated every 6:00 p.m. at San Vicente Church followed by daily Holy Rosary at 7:30 p.m. On Wednesday, February 13, his remains will be escorted at 8:00 a.m. from Borja Funeral Home to Mt. Carmel Cathedral for viewing and last respects. Mass of Christian Burial will be at 11:00 a.m. Burial will follow at Chalan Kanoa Cemetery.

Please join us in prayers.

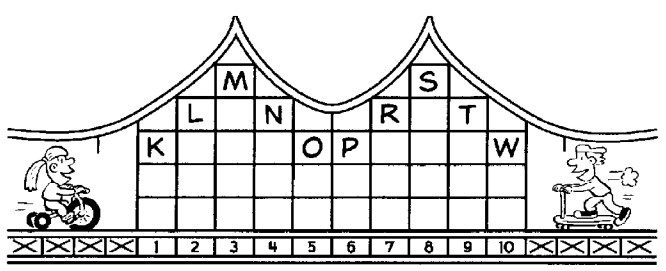
Dolores M. Agulto & Family



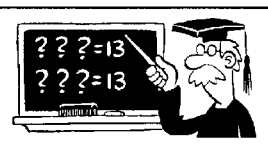
ICE CREAM STICK PUZZLE! Place 12 ice-cream sticks on the table and challenge your friends to arrange them in the form of six equilateral triangles, all the same size. The solution is pictured above.

Junior Whirl

by Charles Barry Townsend



LUCKY 13! Thirteen will be your lucky number if you can use another number, three times, to express the number 13. There are two solutions to this problem that use two different numbers



Answers: 12 + 12/12 and 14 - 14/14 both equal 13.

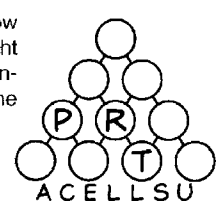
A WORD-BRIDGE!

The bridge above contains 10 supporting words. We give you the first letter of each word, plus plenty of hints.

1. A small barrel.
2. Hog fat.
3. Indians cultivated it.
4. Opposite of midnight.
5. A clumsy fellow.
6. A type of talk.
7. Where coral is found.
8. Spicy sauce, or dance.
9. What ice skaters hate.
10. A frying pan.

Answers: 1. Keg. 2. Lard. 3. Maize. 4. Noon. 5. Oaf. 6. Pep. 7. Reef. 8. Salsa. 9. Thaw. 10. Wok.

CHAIN REACTION! Take the seven letters printed below our diagram and place them in the circles so that eight four-letter words can be read, top to bottom, along the connecting lines. All the words will begin with the letter in the top circle.



Answers: Top to bottom, left to right: Caps, cape, care, cart, cure, curt, cult, cull.

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Pet sitter vs. kennel

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: Which is better for pets when their owners go on vacation: pet sitters in the home or a stay at the kennel? —Joyce in Texas

DEAR JOYCE: That depends on several factors, including the duration of the trip, the quality of available sitters or kennels, the animal's general health and the overall cost.

I've used both services over the years, in addition to bringing my pets to stay with family members (when they could take them). While my experience with both sides has generally been good, I've had the occasional problem.

For example, I had a sitter watch my cat over a weekend who simply dumped two days' worth of food into his dish at once and played video games during her visits. I also reserved space for a longer stay at a pet kennel that advertised roomy cages and daily playtime in a large space—it had neither.

However, I've also had wonderful experiences with sitters and kennels. My advice would be to plan well ahead of the vacation, decide whether to use a sitter or a kennel, and start researching options. Find at least three sitters/kennels that look promising and visit each one. Ask to see the living spaces at the kennels, play areas, and so on. If you use a sitter, have each prospect come over to meet your pet (and you). See if the sitter develops a good rapport with the pet, and whether you get along with him or her, too.

Additionally, most quality kennels (and sitting services) book up during the holiday and vacation season. Try to make your choice and reserve a spot at least a month before your trip, so your pet can get the best care possible while you're away.

■ ■ ■

Send your tips, questions and comments to Paws Corner, c/o King Features Weekly Service, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475, or e-mail them to pawscorner@hotmail.com.

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Strange BUT TRUE

By SAMANTHA WEAVER

■ Good news for the not-so-neat among us: Making your bed could be bad for you. A study done in the United Kingdom at Kingston University showed that the linens of an unmade bed retain less moisture, therefore making them less attractive to dust mites.

■ Those who measure such things claim that a champagne cork at Woodbury Vineyards in New York State once flew nearly 178 feet, making that the longest recorded flight of a champagne cork.

■ It was American science-fiction author John Sladek who made the following sage observation: "The future, according to some scientists, will be exactly like the past, only far more expensive."

■ If you've ever lived on a farm, or even had a backyard garden, you've probably seen the delicate, feathery greens that sprout from the top of a carrot. Believe it or not, there was a time several hundred years ago when it was the fashion for women to wear those greens in their hair.

■ Have you ever suffered from logorrhea? Don't worry; it's not as unpleasant as it may sound. The word "logorrhea" is used to describe incessant and often incoherent speech. It comes from the Greek roots "logo," meaning "word," and "rrhea," meaning "flow." (You may recognize the suffix "-rrhea" from another word, too.)

■ When you think of fiberglass insulation, chances are you think pink, right? Ever wonder why that is? Here's the scoop: In 1987, industry leader Owens Corning trademarked its insulation's signature color. (Which, by the way, made it the first company to trademark a color.)

■ In Sweden, it's not unusual to run across an apple that weighs two pounds.

■ ■ ■

Thought for the Day: "Nothing is more conducive to peace of mind than not having any opinions at all." —Georg Christoph Lichtenberg

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MAGIC MAZE ● ROLL OF —

N Q N K H E B W Y V S P M J H
E B Y Q T O B A C C O I N S V
T Q O U L I R L G D B Y W S T
R P M A K M I L F D B Y M W U
S Q O R S M K P E R I U F D B
Z X W T E P R A C E R U S Q O
N L J E M H F P I D H O D C A
Y W V R I L T E D N S W N Q P
N L K S D I I R E U H F E O E
C B Z Y W T A F H H V U S H H
R Q P E U S S I T T E L I O T

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions - forward, backward, up, down and diagonally.

Arms	Drums	Paper	Tobacco
Carpet	Fat	The dice	Toilet tissue
Coins	Film	The wheel	Wallpaper
Dimes	Honor	Thunder	

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GO FIGURE! by Linda Thistle

The idea of Go Figure is to arrive at the figures given at the bottom and right-hand columns of the diagram by following the arithmetic signs in the order they are given (that is, from left to right and top to bottom). Use only the numbers below the diagram to complete its blank squares and use each of the nine numbers only once.

DIFFICULTY: ★

★ Moderate ★★ Difficult
★★★ GO FIGURE!

	–		x		20
÷		+		x	
	+		x		25
+		+		–	
	–		x		14
11		10		13	

1 2 3 4 5 6 6 7 8

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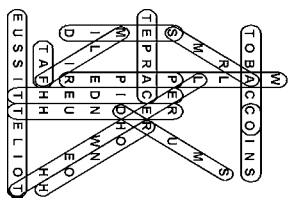
MAGIC MAZE ANSWER



GO FIGURE ANSWER

14	7	x	6	–	8
	–		+		+
25	5	x	3	+	2
	x		+		÷
20	4	x	1	–	6

ROLL OF —

Send in-house Valentines

Wondering how to tame the teasing, name-calling and criticism that so often gets in the way of building good relationships between family members—especially between the kids? Take advantage of Valentine's Day and the week leading up to it to mend relationships or simply to enhance them in a positive way.

Everyone will be saying something nice when they send these in-house valentines! This activity is a non-threatening vehicle for fostering communication in the family and for sharing some of those good feelings that are sometimes hard to express eye to eye. You might even start a new tradition in your family with the valentine box.

Here's how to get started:

Cut a 3-inch slot down the middle of a shoe-box lid. Cover the lid and the box separately with colorful paper, leaving the slot open. Decorate the lid and the box with valentine materials, such as heart-shaped doilies, stickers and hearts cut from construction paper. For extra writing fun, cut out alphabet letters or words from the newspaper to create simple Valentine's Day sayings and glue them on the box, too. Place the lid on the box and tape the sides together. Next, tape a small notepad and pencil or pen on a string to the top of the box.

Between now and Valentine's Day, keep the box on your kitchen table. Encourage all family members, and even friends who stop by, to pull a piece of paper off the notepad and jot down a special Valentine's note to each member of the family. Keep the comments coming, and encourage one another to be positive! Adults or older siblings might help the younger ones with the writing, or each person might draw a picture that expresses his or her feelings. Notes might include comments such as the following: "Katie, you bake great cookies! Love, Dad" or "Mom, Thanks for being such a nice mom. Jessie."

On Valentine's Day, Feb. 14, gather together for a special meal. Open the box and take turns reading the big stack of "love" notes that have accumulated. Enthusiasm will have been building throughout the days preceding Valentine's Day, so expect your kids to be quite excited!

■ ■ ■

Donna Erickson's award-winning television series "Donna's Day" airs on public television nationwide. Visit www.donnasday.com to find out when it airs on your local PBS station and to sign up for Donna's e-newsletter.

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Life & Style

Court has mystery hearing in Spears case

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The court commissioner who placed Britney Spears under conservatorship held a closed-door hearing on an unspecified emergency motion Thursday, a day after the troubled pop star was suddenly released from a psychiatric hospital and ended up being pursued through the city by paparazzi.

The motion was brought before Superior Court Commissioner Reva Goetz by the singer's father, James Spears, and lawyer Andrew Wallet, who is part of the conservatorship, court spokesman Allan Parachini said.

Parachini said that the motion was unopposed but that he could release no details.

"Everything about this matter is sealed," Parachini said after the hearing.

Present in court were attorneys for James Spears, along with Wallet and a court-appointed attorney for Britney Spears.

The singer was taken to a psychiatric hospital at UCLA Medical Center on Jan. 31 under police escort but was discharged Wednesday over the recommendation of her treating psychiatrist and against the wishes of both her parents.

"We are deeply concerned about our daughter's safety and vulnerability and we believe her life is presently at risk," the statement from James and Lynne Spears said. "We ask only that the court's orders be enforced so that a tragedy may be averted."

Goetz last week named James Spears as conservator of his 26-year-old daughter and named him and Wallet conservators of her estate. The commissioner has ordered the conservatorship to last until at least Feb. 14.

Theron dances way to Hasty Pudding award

Actress Charlize Theron holds the pudding pot during the fifty-eighth annual Hasty Pudding Woman of the Year award ceremony, Thursday, Feb. 7, 2008, at Harvard University in Cambridge, Mass.
AP

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. (AP) -- Before Charlize Theron could pick up her Woman of the Year award, she had to prove she was worthy. That meant dancing to disco music, striking modeling poses and wooing someone wearing an elephant suit and a pink sparkly bra - all to delight of the cast members of the Hasty Pudding Theatricals at Harvard University, the nation's oldest undergraduate drama troupe.

Theron's efforts landed her a gold-colored pudding pot.

"I hope you all know I'm a high school dropout. I just thought I'd be clean with you guys," Theron said Thursday.

Actor Christopher Walken is to receive the Hasty Pudding Man of the Year Award on Feb. 15, prior to the opening night performance of "Fable Attraction."

The awards are given each year to performers who have made a "lasting and impressive contribution" to the world of entertainment.

"She's done so many different projects, she has such a range, she's someone we can look up to," said Talisa Friedman, a spokeswoman for Hasty Pudding.

Theron, 32, led a parade through Harvard Square as part of the festivities that precede the annual roast. She said after the parade that she plans to put her award to practical use.

"I'm going to make a stew, then I'm going to eat it," she said.

She also talked about one of her latest projects, "Battle in Seattle," a movie written and directed by her longtime boyfriend, Stuart Townsend.

In this image released by the US Army, the top U.S. commander in Iraq Gen. David Petraeus meets with Oscar winning actress and a U.N. goodwill ambassador Angelina Jolie, right, and Paula Dobriansky, the U.S. under secretary of state for global affairs, in Baghdad, Iraq, Thursday, Feb. 7, 2008.
AP

Jolie's Baghdad visit goes A-list

BAGHDAD (AP)—Note to world leaders: Next time you need instant access to foreign dignitaries and top military brass, forget the usual protocols. Just send in Angelina Jolie.

Hollywood's globe-trotting leading lady swooped into Baghdad on Thursday to highlight the plight of Iraqi refugees, gaining an audience with Gen. David Petraeus, the top U.S. commander in Iraq, and Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, the American Embassy said.

On her mission as a U.N. goodwill ambassador, Jolie also met with Iraqi migration officials to stress that there needs to be a coherent plan for the more than 2 million internally displaced Iraqis who are beginning to trickle back to their homes amid a recent lull in violence.

"There's lots of goodwill and lots of discussion, but there seems to be just a lot of talk at the moment," Jolie said in excerpts of an interview aired on CNN.

Jolie mingled with American troops during lunch at a dining facility in the heavily guarded Green Zone, which houses the embassy and Iraqi government offices. She grabbed a red plastic tray at the mess hall, collected her lunch and sat at a long banquet table to eat - her fork tines down, of course - as flashbulbs from soldiers' digital cameras lit up the wall behind her.

During the CNN interview, Jolie said the fate of Iraq will have an impact on the Middle East for years to come.

"And a big part of what it's going to affect," she said, "is how these people are returned and settled into their homes and their community and brought back together and whether they can live together and what their communities look like."

Winehouse to sing via satellite

LONDON (AP) -- Amy Winehouse will not attend this year's Grammy Awards because her request for a visa was denied, but she will perform by satellite at Sunday's ceremony in Los Angeles.

Winehouse and her acclaimed "Back to Black" album are nominated for Grammys in six categories. She will perform material from the album, an executive close to the Grammys told The Associated Press on the condition of anonymity Thursday.

Winehouse

The Outside Organization, which counts the troubled retro-soul sensation among its clients, said in an e-mail that Winehouse—who shot to fame with the autobiographical single "Rehab"—was disappointed that her request for a visa had been turned down by the U.S. Embassy.

"Amy has been progressing well since entering a rehabilitation clinic two weeks ago and although disappointed with the decision has accepted the ruling and will be concentrating on her recovery," the Outside Organization said.

Two nos don't make a yes for man who wants to marry

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: I have been divorced for 4 1/2 years, after a 24-year marriage. For the last 3 1/2 years, I have been seeing a woman I'll call "Marilyn." My problem is I have proposed to Marilyn on two occasions, and she has said no both times—yet she continues our relationship. I am 49 and she is 45.

Marilyn has never been married and never left home. She lives with her mother and 15-year-old daughter. We all get along great. I guess my question is, do I continue with the way things are, or should I try to meet someone else, take a chance and start all over again?

—WANTS A WIFE IN PENNSYLVANIA

DEAR WANTS A WIFE: You're asking the wrong person the wrong question. You should be asking yourself why you're continuing to pursue a woman who has rejected you twice. If you're happy as things are, I won't dissuade you. However, if it's a wife you're after, you should move on. As my grandfather used to say, if you're looking for trout, you won't find it fishing in a herring barrel.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I love my fiance. We're supposed to be married soon. I can envision myself with him in the future, but I have never really been out on my own to experience life.

I think I may be bisexual. I have been attracted to a woman at work for about a month now, and I can't get her off my mind. I do want to be with my fiance—just not right now. But if I tell him I want a break to explore who I am, I'm afraid I'll lose him forever. Please help.

—LONGING FOR SPACE

DEAR LONGING: You may love your fiance, but you are not ready to make a lifetime commitment to one person right now—male or female. To do otherwise would be unfair to both of you.

The time has come to level with your fiance. It may—or may not—spell the end of the relationship, but it could also be the beginning of something more important: getting to know yourself.

Under no circumstances should you take a vow "to forsake all others" until you're absolutely sure you're able to follow through.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I am 45 years old and in great shape. I have always taken care of myself by watching what I eat and exercising on a daily basis. I take pride in my physical and mental health, and take steps every day to achieve my goals.

People often tell me I don't need to worry about my weight, etc. Actually, I look the way I do because I DO worry about my weight!

So why do these comments bother me? And why do people make these comments?

—FULLY ALIVE AT 45

DEAR FULLY ALIVE: The remarks bother you because they negate the fact that you work hard to be the person you are. And people make them because they fail to appreciate that being mentally and physically in tip-top condition takes discipline and is an ongoing process.

■ ■ ■

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

■ ■ ■

What teens need to know about sex, drugs, AIDS and getting along with peers and parents is in "What Every Teen Should Know." To order, send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $6 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Teen Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

HERE WE ARE, OVERLOOKING SUICIDE GULCH, ABOUT TO HURL OURSELVES DOWN AT BREAKNECK SPEED IN A SLED THAT HARDLY STEERS!
RISKING LIFE AND LIMB! LOOKING DEATH STRAIGHT IN THE EYE!
"WHY?" YOU ASK! WHY DO WE DO IT??
BECAUSE WE GET PAID, I HOPE.
BECAUSE IT'S THERE!
© 1988 Universal Press Syndicate
2/9

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

I'M GOING INTO TOWN, WANT TO COME?
WHAT FOR?
THE GUY WHO CAME UP WITH THE CORRUGATED PAPER ESPRESSO CUP SLEEVE IS SIGNING AUTOGRAPHS AT THE CAFE.
NO, YOU GO ALONG WITHOUT ME.
ANDY WARHOL WAS DEAD ON.
2/9

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

I THINK THE NEW GUY IS A FAKE.
WHY DO YOU SAY THAT?
HAVE YOU NOTICED HOW HE ALWAYS WAITS FOR THE PHONE TO RING BEFORE HE PICKS UP?
2/9
PSYCHIC HOTLINE
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CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

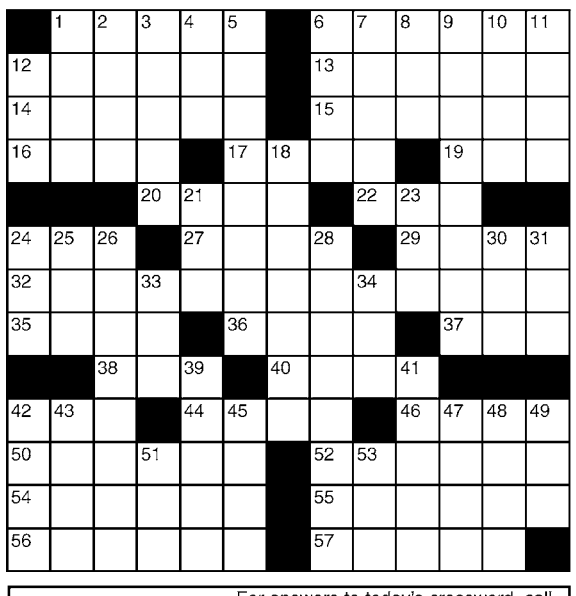
ACROSS
1 Attempts
6 Turn on a pivot
12 Low pH
13 Overly decorated
14 Elk
15 Hines or Phyfe
16 Gaelic
17 Read bar codes
19 Donkey
20 Cold War abbr.
22 Hood's weapon
24 Lawyers' org.
27 Burden
29 Slapstick arsenal
32 1942 Jack Benny movie
35 Uncomplicated
36 Unuttered "alas"
37 Peacock network
38 Asian holiday
40 Bewildered
42 Spring mo.
44 "Let's Make a Deal" host
46 Despondent
50 One of the kin
52 Enclose with earth, e.g.
54 Spa, e.g.
55 Humdinger (Sl.)
56 Fixes a text
57 Gratifies fully

DOWN
1 "Lion King" villain
2 Gratuities
3 Farewell
4 Morsel
5 Victor over paper
6 Pop
7 Twisted
8 Hostel
9 Holiday
10 Greek vowels
11 Monocle piece
12 Shock partner
18 Skull-related
21 — -mo
23 Likely
24 Chowed down
25 Feathery neckwear
26 Hard to comprehend
28 Yukon transportation
30 Recede
31 Moment
33 Storm center
34 Commonest English word
39 One of the bases
41 Monastery bigwig
42 Farm measure
43 Haiku or limerick
45 Picnic invaders
47 Lounge around
48 Les Etats- —
49 Supplement, with "out"
51 Trinity member
53 Extinct New Zealander

Solution time: 27 mins.

R	O	N	■	S	I	P	S	■	S	M	O	G
A	L	E	■	P	R	E	P	■	T	A	R	A
C	A	R	R	I	A	G	E	■	A	R	T	S
E	F	F	E	C	T	■	N	O	R	■	■	■
■	■	■	S	E	E	■	C	A	R	I	N	A
C	U	P	I	D	■	H	E	R	■	R	O	C
A	V	O	N	■	S	I	R	■	H	I	G	H
L	E	O	■	O	P	T	■	S	A	S	S	Y
M	A	R	I	N	A	■	A	N	N	■	■	■
■	■	■	G	E	M	■	G	O	O	G	O	L
W	O	O	L	■	M	A	R	R	I	A	G	E
H	O	B	O	■	E	P	E	E	■	E	L	F
O	H	I	O	■	D	E	E	D	■	L	E	T

Yesterday's answer 2-9



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: David Gallagher, 23; Mena Suvari, 29; Zhang Ziyi, 29; Mia Farrow, 63

Happy Birthday: So much will depend on your ability to let go and move on this year. You will have the dedication and determination to do so but, if you are too emotional or sensitive, it may hold you back. You can rid yourself of people and situations that no longer have substance or meaning in your life. New experiences will teach you about reaching life goals. Your numbers are 6, 14, 24, 27, 40, 42

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): It's the talks you have that will backfire and get you into trouble today. Keep your thoughts to yourself. Your observations will give you a bird's eye view of what's to come, allowing you to react accordingly. ✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): A long shot will work for you today. You are sitting in a favorable position and, as long as you don't take other people's word as gospel, you will win. Travel, turned into a romantic adventure, will be fun. ✪✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): You can make things happen today. Ask for what you want and need to advance and you will. Don't let someone else's jealousy stand in your way or get involved in gossip and you will be the one who looks good. ✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): If there is anything you aren't happy with, adjust things more to your liking. Emotional issues should be dealt with. Someone you trust will give you substantial advice, leading to good personal and professional decisions. ✪✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Love is in the stars but don't let jealousy stand between you and the one you want to be with. Positive action will bring the best results. Be true to yourself and the people around you. ✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Kick off the day doing things you enjoy and follow through by getting together with the people you like. There will be substantial gains where your love life is concerned and the opportunity to show your fun side will make a difference. ✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Don't put up with anything or anyone who is making your life miserable. Remove yourself from whatever situation is causing you grief. You will discover that you can do so much better if you get out and see what's available. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): You may face an iffy situation if you are torn between family or outside interests. Gauge your actions carefully; it may not be worth your while to neglect your personal responsibilities. Find a way to fit everything you want to do into your day. ✪✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): If you brag or make promises, someone will stop you in your tracks. Think before you do something you may regret. It's easy to talk but you may realize you have been set up by someone who doesn't buy what you say. ✪✪

CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Love and romance are heading your way, along with financial gains and a chance to take

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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on a new project. Open your heart, your wallet and your mind to all the benefits of freedom and being able to follow your dreams. ✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): You may feel confused by something that is going on personally. Give yourself a chance to rediscover what is actually going on. Challenges can be met if you know what you are dealing with. ✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Keep your feet planted firmly on the ground and do what you know will help whatever cause you believe in. You can make some interesting evaluations regarding your home life but don't try to alter anything just yet. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are excitable, dynamic and emotional. You are determined to succeed, you love deeply and you help without expecting in return.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun,* ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

		4	5		8	3		
	2			7			4	
	5		9		7		6	
		8		3		4		
	9		2		1		7	
	8			6			9	
		9	3		4	5		

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 2/09

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

1	8	2	6	5	7	4	9	3
4	5	9	3	1	8	7	2	6
7	3	6	2	4	9	1	8	5
2	1	5	8	9	3	6	4	7
6	9	7	5	2	4	8	3	1
3	4	8	7	6	1	2	5	9
5	2	1	9	8	6	3	7	4
8	6	3	4	7	5	9	1	2
9	7	4	1	3	2	5	6	8

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 2/08

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

GET YOUR FLU SHOT — **Solution: 10 letters**

E	B	P	S	P	E	K	I	N	D	L	I	W	R	M
H	R	H	A	G	E	S	H	O	C	E	L	L	S	U
C	O	U	G	H	E	T	O	S	M	U	R	E	S	C
T	N	S	T	F	L	L	S	A	R	H	L	I	L	U
A	C	D	I	A	B	E	T	E	S	P	C	I	A	S
C	H	L	E	T	R	S	V	S	O	K	N	R	S	E
E	I	H	C	I	B	E	N	E	F	I	C	I	A	L
P	T	A	N	G	F	L	P	U	C	D	E	E	N	M
I	I	G	S	U	R	I	V	M	S	E	K	A	H	S
D	S	N	E	E	R	F	S	C	E	D	O	E	T	A
E	T	U	C	E	N	S	S	M	O	T	P	M	Y	S
M	S	L	A	H	I	S	E	C	R	L	A	I	R	T
I	E	C	K	C	A	T	T	A	I	E	D	T	O	H
C	T	N	A	L	P	O	Y	O	U	N	G	S	N	M
Ⓔ	Ⓡ	Ⓤ	Ⓒ	P	R	E	V	E	N	T	I	O	N	A

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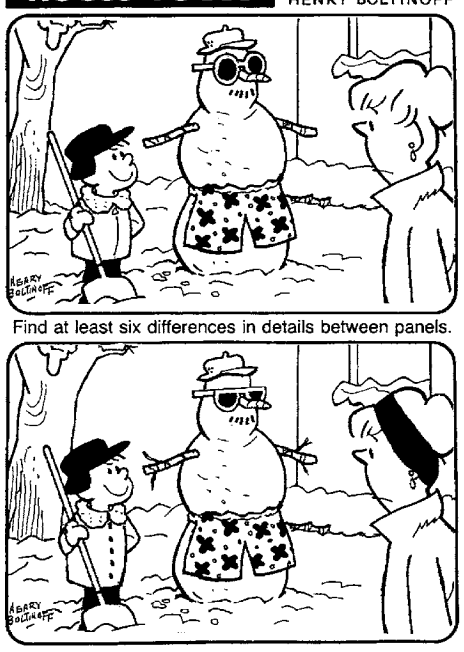
Ages, Asthma, Attack, Beneficial, Blood, Bronchitis, Catch, Cells, Class, Clinic, Colds, Cough, Cure, Diabetes, Doctor, Eggs, Epidemic, Fatigue, Fever, Files, Free, Germs, Health, Kind, Life, Lung, March, Mucus, Nasal, Need, Nurse, Pain, People, Pinch, Plan, Poke, Prevention, React, Season, Serum, Shakes, Shot, Sick, Step, Symptoms, Temperature, Tests, Time, Trial, Virus, Wild, Young

Yesterday's Answer: Yuletide

We listened to your requests! **TREASURY #6** is the first-ever Wonderword book containing only 20 x 20 puzzles, with 75 of these large puzzles. To order, send check or money order for $10.95 each plus $3.25 p&h ($14.20 total each, U.S. funds only) for the first volume, $1.50 p&h for each additional volume, to Wonderword, Universal Press Syndicate, 4520 Main St., Kansas City, Mo. 64111 or call toll-free 1-800-255-6734, ext. 6688. Order online at upuzzles.com.

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.

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Differences: 1. Woman has headband. 2. Sunglasses are different. 3. Boy's shirt has buttons. 4. Tree is wider. 5. Snowman's "arms" are different. 6. Boy is taller.

Wishing Well®

6	4	5	3	6	5	7	3	8	4	3	8	5
M	M	Y	B	E	O	P	E	A	A	D	D	U
6	7	8	2	7	8	4	8	2	8	4	3	6
R	R	A	H	A	P	K	T	A	T	E	E	G
4	6	7	8	6	8	2	5	4	7	2	8	6
A	E	I	O	R	S	V	W	C	S	E	I	F
8	6	2	7	4	8	5	4	7	8	5	7	6
T	O	A	E	H	U	I	I	O	A	N	T	R
4	2	8	5	8	4	5	8	5	4	8	7	5
L	P	T	B	I	D	A	O	T	H	N	H	T
4	7	4	5	6	3	7	2	4	6	4	2	3
A	E	P	L	M	C	R	U	P	O	Y	R	I
7	2	3	5	2	3	6	2	3	6	2	6	3
S	P	S	E	O	I	N	S	V	E	E	Y	E

HERE IS A PLEASANT LITTLE GAME that will give you a message every day. It's a numerical puzzle designed to spell out your fortune. Count the letters in your first name. If the number of letters is 6 or more, subtract 4. If the number is less than 6, add 3. The result is your key number. Start at the upper left-hand corner and check one of your key numbers, left to right. Then read the message the letters under the checked figures give you.

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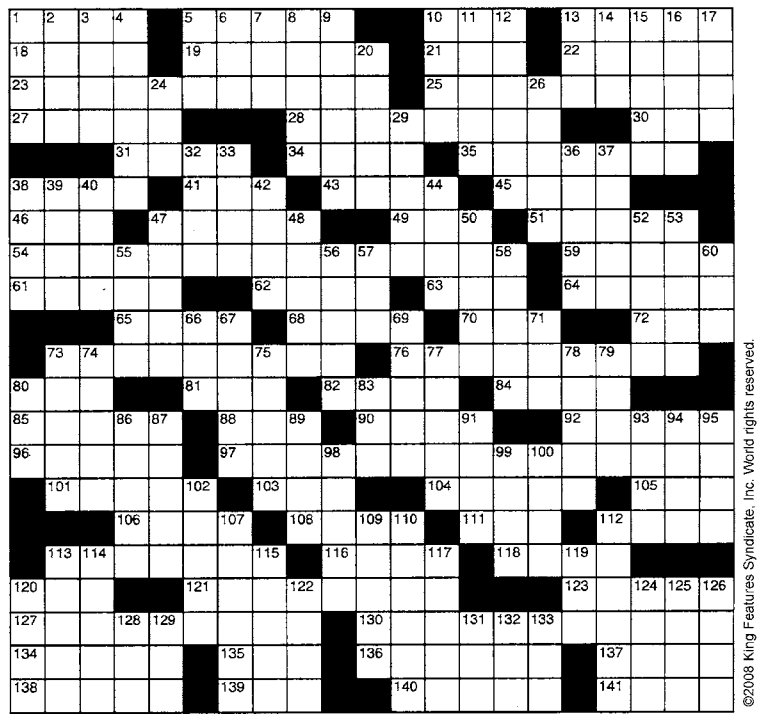
Super Crossword — WHIRLED TOUR

ACROSS
1 Hollywood clashers
5 Out of line
10 Palindromic Parseghian
13 Haarlem export
18 '78 Bujold thriller
19 Lavished
21 Waggle
22 Meyerbeer masterpiece
23 West Indian trouble-maker?
25 Mideastern show tune?
27 Aquatic animal
28 Appraise
30 Compass pt.
31 Vacation sensation
34 Citrus fruit
35 Brand or Chamberlain
38 Thames town
41 Son of Noah
43 Touch down
45 "— Dinah" ('58 hit)
46 Opening
47 — acid
49 One — customer
51 Gambols
54 Speechless, in Southeast Asia?
59 Church members
61 Hold up
62 Pro bono
63 Summer quencher
64 Gawk
65 Israeli dance
68 TV's "— Life"
70 Brenda or Brandon
72 "Unforgettable" name
73 South American designer?
76 Scandinavian sugar substitute?
80 Muir or Miniver
81 By means of
82 Nobelist Wiesel
84 — gin fizz
85 Gam and Wilson
88 Exec's deg.
90 Concept
92 Pointless
96 Adult insect
97 Central American song?
101 Addis —
103 Rock's — Bravos
104 Ointment
105 Ornamental vine
106 Whip, for one
108 Family members, to many
111 Hum bug?
112 Perplexed
113 Artist Vincent
116 Stagger
118 Haul
120 Impresario Hurok
121 Self-assurance
123 Biblical kingdom
127 Caribbean entree?
130 African palanquins?
134 Where the buoys are
135 Fr. holy woman
136 Beethoven symphony
137 Ginger cookie
138 Swelling
139 Aunt or niece
140 Bestow
141 "Guarding —" ('94 film)

DOWN
1 Narcissus' nymph
2 Big kid?
3 Fail to mention
4 Glossy cloth
5 Garment part
6 — Paulo, Brazil
7 Relatives
8 Actress Georgia
9 Plant pest
10 Hunt's "— Ben Adhem"
11 Director Polanski
12 Let up
13 Anderson's "High —"
14 News org.
15 Raze
16 Musical of 1919
17 Unwind a rind
20 Stage stuff
24 Levin or Remsen
26 Extremely infrequently?
29 Slowly, to Sibelius
32 Dispel
33 Head set?
36 Sacred cows
37 Paul of "The Burning Bed"
38 "Heavens to Betsy!"
39 "Little Man —" ('91 film)
40 Fall birthstone
42 Irritate
44 Mrs. David Copperfield
47 "Blue —" ('77 hit)
48 It's walked at Windsor
50 Baffle
52 Nero's instrument
53 Scarecrow stuffing
55 Bolger/Haley co-star
56 Singer Della
57 Moisten
58 Starts a lawn
60 Still
66 Gun the engine
67 Out on —
69 Stage whisper
71 Sushi candidate
73 — donna
74 Cornerstone abbr.
75 Tag
77 Literary parson
78 Din
79 Easter ends it
80 Med. test
83 Taylor or Trotta
86 "F Troop" corporal
87 Edna Ferber novel
89 Crooked
91 Spirited steed
93 Baudelaire's buddies
94 Church area
95 "Orinoco Flow" singer
98 Grenoble's river
99 Beseeched
100 Done
102 Take on
107 Way out
109 On edge
110 Anchored
112 Taken way aback?
113 Endorse, with "for"
114 "The Sandbox" playwright
115 Wasteland
117 Enticed
119 Timber tree
120 Sailboat, e.g.
122 — -Ball (arcade game)
124 Mozart's "— kleine Nachtmusik"
125 Some underwear
126 Snake charmer's crew
128 Bond rating
129 NBC comedy showcase
131 Support
132 Sgt. or cpl.
133 Cornfield cry



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Trivia test by Fifi Rodriguez

1. GEOGRAPHY: Where are the Orkney Islands located?
2. MUSIC: To which rock group did singer Freddie Mercury belong?
3. TELEVISION: Who played Uncle Joe on TV's "Petticoat Junction"?
4. CARTOONS: Which animated superhero's theme song contains the lyrics, "Speed of lightning, roar of thunder,/ Fighting all who rob or plunder."?
5. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE: What is the currency of Brazil?
6. ENTERTAINERS: Which actor/director was born with the name "Melvin Kaminsky"?
7. MOVIES: Where was Alfred Hitchcock's movie "The Birds" set?
8. U.S. STATES: What is the only U.S. state named after a president?
9. LITERATURE: Who wrote the book of poems titled "Songs from the Portuguese"?
10. FOOD & DRINK: What is ghee?

Answers

1. North of Scotland
2. Queen
3. Edgar Buchanan
4. "Underdog"
5. The real
6. Mel Brooks
7. Bodega Bay, Calif.
8. Washington
9. Elizabeth Barrett Browning
10. Clarified butter

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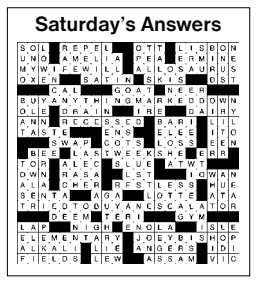
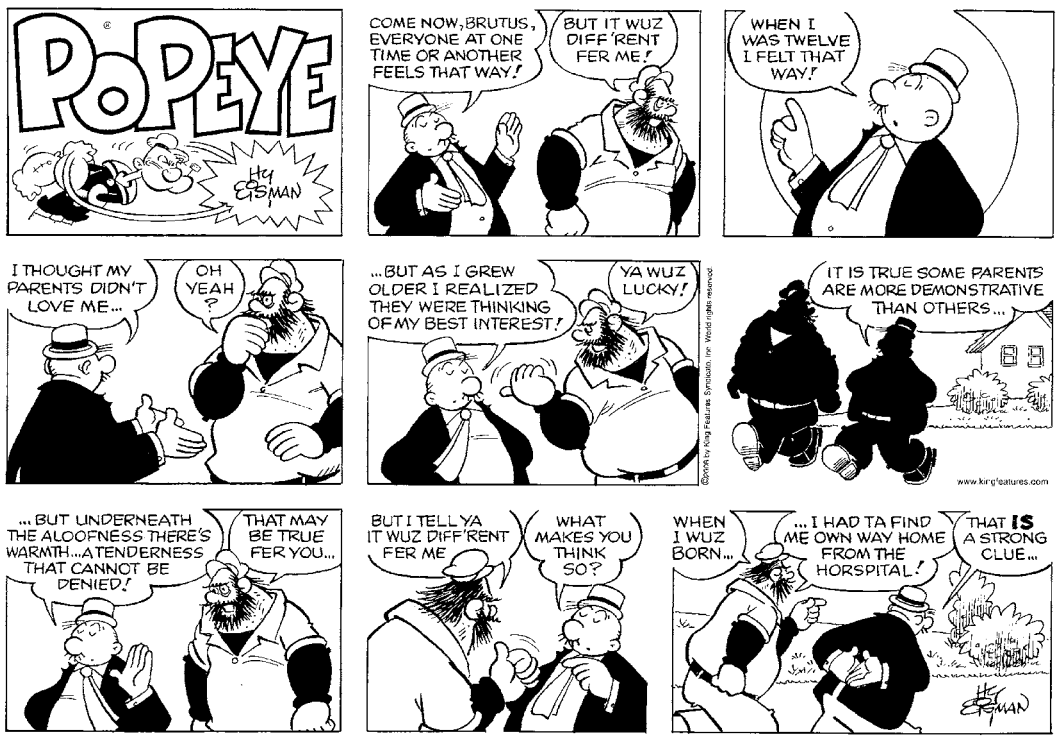
Saturday's Answers

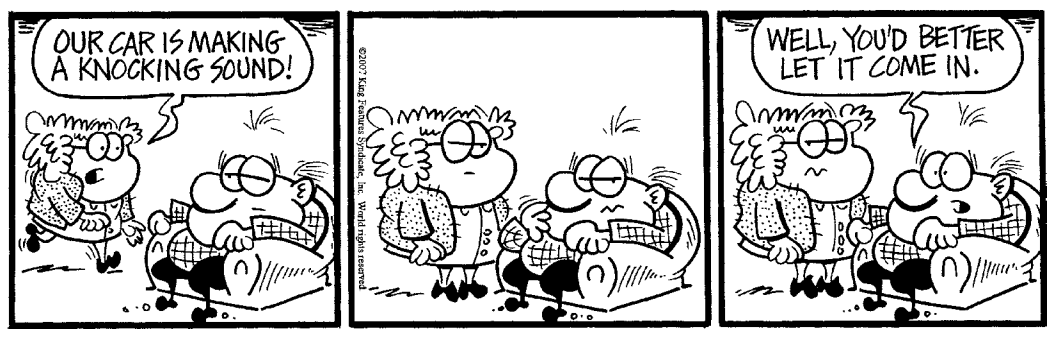


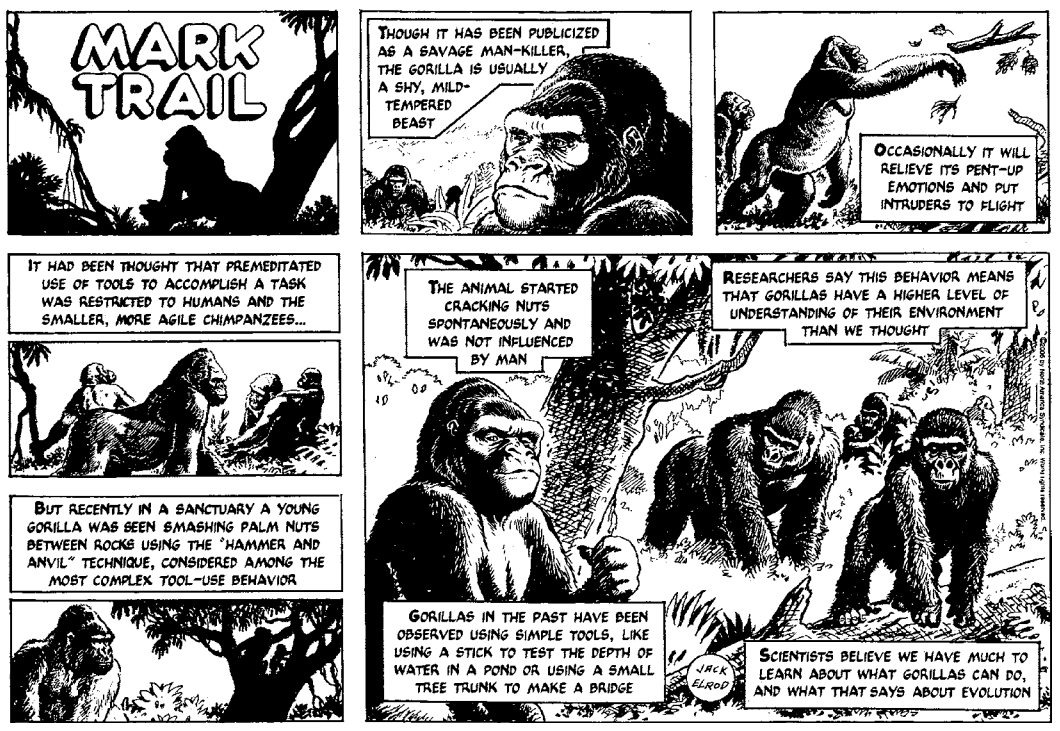

POPEYE
COME NOW, BRUTUS, EVERYONE AT ONE TIME OR ANOTHER FEELS THAT WAY!
BUT IT WUZ DIFF'RENT FER ME!
WHEN I WAS TWELVE I FELT THAT WAY!
I THOUGHT MY PARENTS DIDN'T LOVE ME...
OH YEAH?
...BUT AS I GREW OLDER I REALIZED THEY WERE THINKING OF MY BEST INTEREST!
YA WUZ LUCKY!
IT IS TRUE SOME PARENTS ARE MORE DEMONSTRATIVE THAN OTHERS...
...BUT UNDERNEATH THE ALOOFNESS THERE'S WARMTH...A TENDERNESS THAT CANNOT BE DENIED!
THAT MAY BE TRUE FER YOU...
BUT I TELL YA IT WUZ DIFF'RENT FER ME
WHAT MAKES YOU THINK SO?
WHEN I WUZ BORN...
...I HAD TA FIND ME OWN WAY HOME FROM THE HORSPITAL!
THAT IS A STRONG CLUE...
Hey Eisman

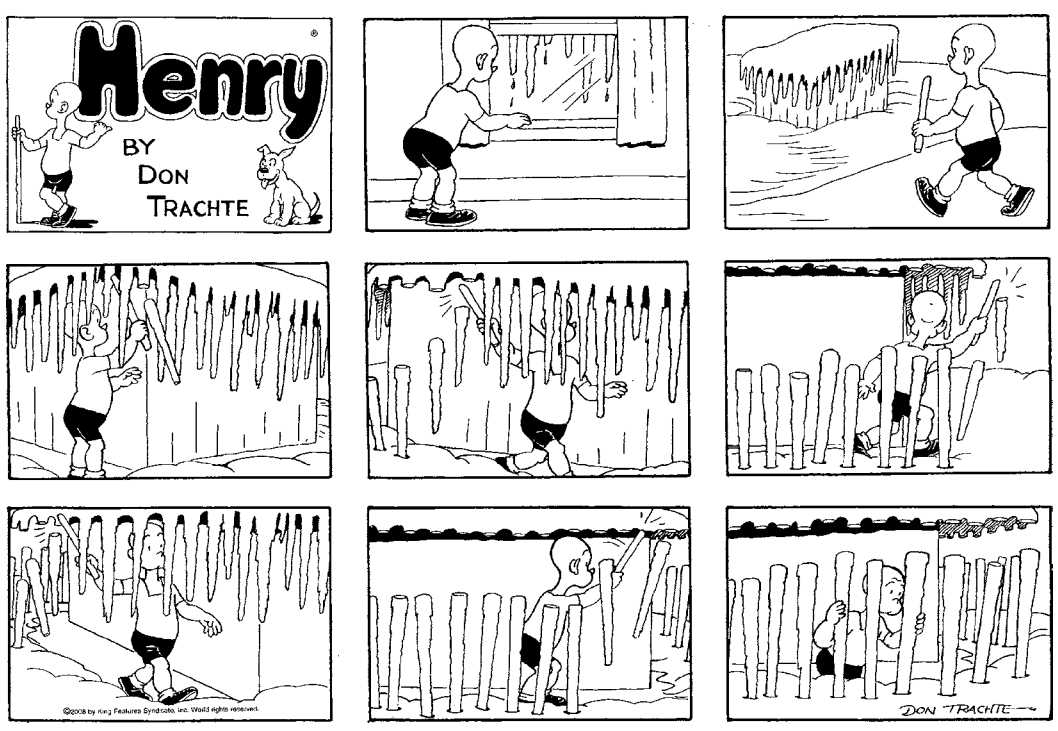
Amber Waves — by Dave T. Phipps

THIS IS GOING TO BE OUR BEST SNOWMAN EVER!
IT NEEDS SOMETHING THAT WILL SET IT APART FROM OTHER SNOWMEN.
SOMETHING CLASSY YET A LITTLE PROVOCATIVE...
UH, HONEY, YOU KNOW YOUR FANCY BLUE COCKTAIL DRESS...

The Spats — by Jeff Pickering




MARK TRAIL
THOUGH IT HAS BEEN PUBLICIZED AS A SAVAGE MAN-KILLER, THE GORILLA IS USUALLY A SHY, MILD-TEMPERED BEAST
OCCASIONALLY IT WILL RELIEVE ITS PENT-UP EMOTIONS AND PUT INTRUDERS TO FLIGHT
IT HAD BEEN THOUGHT THAT PREMEDITATED USE OF TOOLS TO ACCOMPLISH A TASK WAS RESTRICTED TO HUMANS AND THE SMALLER, MORE AGILE CHIMPANZEES...
BUT RECENTLY IN A SANCTUARY A YOUNG GORILLA WAS SEEN SMASHING PALM NUTS BETWEEN ROCKS USING THE "HAMMER AND ANVIL" TECHNIQUE, CONSIDERED AMONG THE MOST COMPLEX TOOL-USE BEHAVIOR
THE ANIMAL STARTED CRACKING NUTS SPONTANEOUSLY AND WAS NOT INFLUENCED BY MAN
RESEARCHERS SAY THIS BEHAVIOR MEANS THAT GORILLAS HAVE A HIGHER LEVEL OF UNDERSTANDING OF THEIR ENVIRONMENT THAN WE THOUGHT
GORILLAS IN THE PAST HAVE BEEN OBSERVED USING SIMPLE TOOLS, LIKE USING A STICK TO TEST THE DEPTH OF WATER IN A POND OR USING A SMALL TREE TRUNK TO MAKE A BRIDGE
SCIENTISTS BELIEVE WE HAVE MUCH TO LEARN ABOUT WHAT GORILLAS CAN DO, AND WHAT THAT SAYS ABOUT EVOLUTION
JACK ELROD



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JOB OPPORTUNITIES

1 ACCOUNTANT (ST 7312)
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1 (ASSISTANT) MANAGER GEN. (ST 7313)
Salary:$4.50/hour. Benefits: Self provided housing; self provided food; free medical insurance & workers compensation insurance. Contact: RYU Corporation @287-5918.

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1 KITCHEN HELPER (ST 7314)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; meals (no charge); medical & workmen's compensation coverage & own transportation. Contact: Rong Hua Corporation @233-4825.

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1 HOUSEWORKER (ST 7315)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arrange housing; free food & medical. Contact: Celina D. Taylor @235-0916.

---

2 WAREHOUSE MAN (ST 7316)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical insurance & workers compensation. Contact: Saipan Dolphin Corporation dba Dolphin Wholesale/Mart @235-5429.

2 CASHIER (ST 7317)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self provided housing; self provided food; medical insurance & workers compensation. Contact: Saipan Dolphin Corporation dba Dolphin Wholesale/Mart @235-5429.

1 GEN. MAINT. WORKER (ST 7318)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self provided housing; self provided food; medical insurance & workers compensation. Contact: Saipan Dolphin Corporation dba Dolphin Wholesale/Mart @235-5429.

1 COMPUTER PROGRAMMER (ST 7319)
Salary:$4.50/hour. Benefits: Self provided housing; self provided food; medical insurance & workers compensation. Contact: Saipan Dolphin Corporation dba Dolphin Wholesale/Mart @235-5429.

---

1 MAINTENANCE REPAIRER INDUSTRIAL (ST 7320)
Salary:$3.55-$7.50/hour. Benefits: Company provided housing; self provided food; health insurance & workmen's compensation. Contact: Pacific Rainbow (CNMI), Inc. dba Rainbow & Sherwin Williams Paint @234-1717/235-7233.

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1 AUTO BODY REPAIRER (ST 7321)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self provide housing; self provide food; medical & workers compensation. Contact: Javili General Partnership dba YJC Auto Shop @235-4928.

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1 HOUSEWORKER (ST 7322)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: $100.00/deductible housing; $100.00/deductible food & medical provided. Contact: Guerrero, Joseph @483-4116.

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1 H.E. OPERATOR (ST 7323)
Salary:$4.00/hour. Benefits: Employer provided housing; employee provided food; medical & workmen's compensation. Contact: Pacific Drilling Ltd. @235-8531.

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1 SALES ENGINEER (ST 7324)
Salary:$4.16/hour. Benefits: $200.00/housing monthly allowance; $150.00/food monthly allowance; medical insurance; workmen's compensation; self arranged housing & self arranged food. Contact: Carrier Guam, Inc. Saipan Branch @234-8330/8347.

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1 AUTO MECHANIC (ST 7325)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Workmen's compensation; bonding & medical (as per contract). Contact: Philpan International Corp. dba MC-Asia International. @235-6100/6695.

1 ACCOUNTANT (ST 7326)
Salary:$1,200.00/monthly. Benefits: Workmen's compensation; bonding & medical (as per contract). Contact: Philpan International Corp. dba MC-Asia International. @235-6100/6695.

---

1 SECURITY GUARD (ST 7327)
Salary:$3.30-$3.55/hour. Benefits: $100.00/housing monthly; employee provided food; medical & workmans compensation employer provided. Contact: Joseph T. Torres dba Courtney's Plaza @235-1662.

---

1 PROFESSOR (ST 7328)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: ER provided housing at a free of charge; self provided food; medical provided & workman compensation provided. Contact: Frank C. Agulto dba Saipan's Quality Products @323-8248.

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1 HOUSEWORKER (ST 7329)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: $100.00/housing deductible; $100.00/food deductible; medical & workmen's compensation. Contact: Mariano Fajardo @233-4865.

---

1 GEN. MANAGER (ST 7330)
Salary:$4.00/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; employee provided food; medical & workers compensation & transportation from-to jobsite. Contact: Mantrade Company Inc. @235-0695.

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1 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT (ST 7331)
Salary:$3.55-$6.00/hour. Benefits: Free housing except utility; medical bill & workers compensation is company provided. Contact: Big Boy Marine Sports, Inc. dba Big Boy'z II Marine @234-3358.

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1 AUTO BODY, REPAIRER (ST 7332)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Company provide barracks; food not applicable; workers compensation & medical expenses. Contact: Marine Tech (Saipan), Inc. dba S2 Club @322-5079.

WELDER (ST 7333)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Free housing; self provide food; workers compensation & medical. Contact: CJ&L Construction Company @322-1954.

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37 SEWING MACHINE OPERATOR (ST 7334)
Salary:$3.55-$4.25/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self arranged food; free medical expenses & workmen's compensation. Contact: United International Corporation @235-6888/7888.

WHATZIT Solution:
Spots before the eyes

---

workmen's compensation. Contact: United International Corporation @235-6888/7888.

11 SEWER (ST 7335)
Salary:$3.55-$4.25/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self arranged food; free medical expenses & workmen's compensation. Contact: United International Corporation @235-6888/7888.

2 PRESSER (IRONING) (ST 7336)
Salary:$3.55-$4.25/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self arranged food; free medical expenses & workmen's compensation. Contact: United International Corporation @235-6888/7888.

2 ELECTRICIAN (ST 7337)
Salary:$3.55-$4.25/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self arranged food; free medical expenses & workmen's compensation. Contact: United International Corporation @235-6888/7888.

1 FIRST AID ATTENDANT (ST 7338)
Salary:$3.55-$4.25/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self arranged food; free medical expenses & workmen's compensation. Contact: United International Corporation @235-6888/7888.

1 KITCHEN HELPER (ST 7339)
Salary:$3.55-$4.25/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self arranged food; free medical expenses & workmen's compensation. Contact: United International Corporation @235-6888/7888.

4 PATTERN GRADER CUTTER (ST 7340)
Salary:$3.55-$4.25/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self arranged food; free medical expenses & workmen's compensation. Contact: United International Corporation @235-6888/7888.

1 TAILOR (ST 7341)
Salary:$3.55-$4.25/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self arranged food; free medical expenses & workmen's compensation. Contact: United International Corporation @235-6888/7888.

1 MERCHANDISE (ST 7342)
Salary:$3.55-$4.25/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self arranged food; free medical expenses & workmen's compensation. Contact: United International Corporation @235-6888/7888.

---

1 GENERAL MANAGER (ST 7343)
Salary:$600.00/monthly. Benefits: Medical & workmen compensation. Contact: Yebbun Corporation @235-0595.

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1 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT (ST 7344)
Salary:$3.85/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self provide food; medical & workmen compensation provided by employer. Contact: Jose K Pangelinan dba Micronesia Design Group & Associates @286-7939.

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14 IRONER (ST 7345)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical & workmen compensation. Contact: Kyunseung (Saipan), Inc. @322-5795.

8 CHECKER (QC) (ST 7346)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical & workmen compensation. Contact: Kyunseung (Saipan), Inc. @322-5795.

1 GENERAL MANAGER (ST 7347)
Salary:$2,500.00-$4,000.00/monthly. Benefits: Medical & workmen compensation. Contact: Kyunseung (Saipan), Inc. @322-5795.

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4"X5" Beseler B&W enlarger, chromegy color enlarger, paper cutter, styles trays, Norman P2000wts, studio strobes with 2 heads, softbox $300. Call 433-0326, 287-0461

Calumet 4"X5" View camera with 90mm Caltar lens, tripod, film holders and extras $150. Call 433-0326

3 Penn Sen. 14/o reels with rods, $250 ea. 3 Penn international 50TW with rods $250 ea, 4 Penn Sen. 9/0 with rods, $125 ea.

Mahogany Bunk Bed with Serta mattress, $200

Whirlpool Electric Range, $150

Detecto 200lb scale, $100

Denyo/Yanmar Diesel 5KV Generator, electric start 110/220 with extra motors, $1200.

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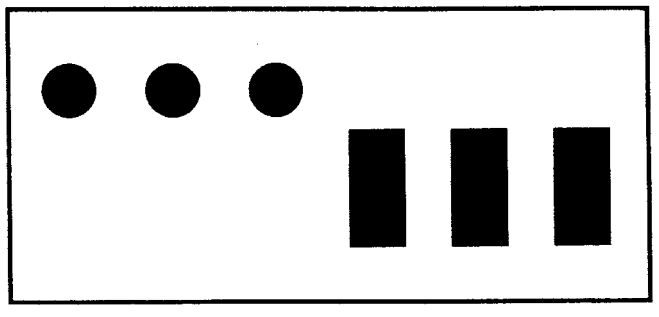

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Find today's solution in this section

CLASSIFIEDS RATES AND POLICIES

Saipan Tribune's Classifieds Section gives you the right exposure without hurting your pockets. Stretch your dollar and get results.

CLASSIFIED ADS

Saipan Tribune also offers a Super Saver Package—a complete 7-day run on both print and online edition, for as low as $25 per 3 liner ad for garage sales, apartment rentals, help wanted, auto and more. You can choose from any of below packages that fits your budget.

ADS (7DAYS)	COMBO (PRINT AND ONLINE)
• 3-Liner	$25
• 5-Liner	$35
• 3-Liner with picture	$45
• 5-Liner with picture	$55

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

As added service to our valued customers, you may now submit all your JVA placements for announcement/publication in *Saipan Tribune's* print and online edition and KZMI/KCNM at the same time. No more worries of having to go to two different locations every time you need to place job vacancy announcements. Special rates are available for JVA customers under this arrangement.

LOWER RATES! Effective Feb. 3, 2007

Print*	
• 1st position	$10
• 2nd position	$3
• Succeeding positions	$1
Combo (Print and Online)*	
• 1st position	$13
• 2nd position	$4
• Succeeding positions	$2
Radio (KCNM/KZMI)	
• Up to 6 positions	$5
• More than 6 positions	$10

*These rates apply to all vacancy announcements that include corresponding benefits and which announcements are all under the same company name.

ADVERTISING DEADLINE

Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

Job Vacancy Announcements

Monday Through Friday Issues: All ads placed before 12 noon will come out the next publication date.

Saturday And Sunday Issues:
- *Saipan Tribune:* All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on either Sunday or Monday issues.

- KCNM/KZMI: All ads placed on Friday (9am to 5pm) will be for Monday's radio announcement.

CANCELLATION

Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

Job Vacancy Announcements

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

CHECK YOUR ADS

Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

ADVERTISING POLICY

All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, Saipan Tribune reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

1 COMPUTER OPERATOR (ST 7348)
Salary:$3.55-$4.50/hour. Benefits: Medical & workmen compensation. Contact: Kyunseung (Saipan), Inc. @322-5795.

6 CUTTER (ST 7349)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical & workmen compensation. Contact: Kyunseung (Saipan), Inc. @322-5795.

1 PACKER (ST 7350)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical & workmen compensation. Contact: Kyunseung (Saipan), Inc. @322-5795.

1 SECURITY GUARD (ST 7351)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical & workmen compensation. Contact: Kyunseung (Saipan), Inc. @322-5795.

1 COMMERCIAL CLEANER (ST 7352)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical & workmen compensation. Contact: Kyunseung (Saipan), Inc. @322-5795.

3 MAINTENANCE REPAIRER (ST 7353)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical & workmen compensation. Contact: Kyunseung (Saipan), Inc. @322-5795.

50 SEWING MACHINE OPERATOR (ST 7354)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical & workmen compensation. Contact: Kyunseung (Saipan), Inc. @322-5795.

1 RESTAURANT SUPERVISOR (ST 7355)
Salary:$3.05/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self arranged food & workmen's compensation. Contact: Xinlong Corporation dba El's Restaurant @888-4025.

1 COOK (ST 7356)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Employee self arranged housing; employee provided food; workmen's compensation insurance is employee provided & medical expenses is reimbursable. Contact: Yolanda O. Alfante dba Kulit's Ent., @235-1105.

1 MASON (ST 7357)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical reimbursable; workmen's compensation & insurance. Contact: RJCL Corporation dba RNV Construction @235-8778.

1 CARPENTER (ST 7358)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical reimbursable; workmen's compensation & insurance. Contact: RJCL Corporation dba RNV Construction @235-8778.

1 JANITOR (ST 7359)
Salary:$3.55-$3.70/hour. Benefits: Medical/workmen's compensation; free transportation to & from jobsite at employers designated pick-up points. Contact: YCO Corp. dba YCO TrueValue Hardware/Do It Best Hardware/Liberty Dept. Store/ YCO Construction/Appliance Outlets/Liberty Dept. Store/Naked Fish Bar & Grill/Servistar Motorsports @ 233-3112/3.

1 ACCOUNTANT (ST 7360)
Salary:$4.00-$8.00/hour. Benefits: Self provided housing; self provided food; workmen's compensation & medical provided. Contact: Rufo T. Mafnas dba Rufo T. Mafnas, CPA @233-7836/233-1040.

1 BUILDING MAINTENANCE REPAIRER (ST 7361)
Salary:$3.55-$5.00/hour. Benefits: $325.00/monthly housing; workmen's compensation & medical insurance. Contact: Saipan Community School @234-6687.

1 MAINTENANCE/BLDG. REPAIRER (ST 7362)
Salary:$4.25/hour. Benefits: Self provided housing; self provided food; medical & workmen's compensation employer provided. Contact: Gualo Rai Court Apartment, Inc. @234-6552.

1 MERCHANDISE (QUALITY CONTROL) DISTRIBUTOR (ST 7363)
Salary:$3.85/hour. Benefits: Self provided housing; medical & workmen's compensation. Contact: Carmen Safeway Ent., Inc. dba Carmen Safeway Supermarket, Baby News, C-Mart Floral Lane Pacifica Funeral Services @234-7313.

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

DONALD BUFRON, Plaintiff, -v- SAMUEL RAYBURN, Defendant. : CIVIL ACTION NO. 04-0043

SECOND AMENDED NOTICE OF SALE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, pursuant to a Writ of Execution issued by the Court in this matter on October 12, 2007, I will sell, at public auction, to the highest bidder, on the terms and conditions set forth hereinbelow, all of the right, title, and interest of Defendant in and to the following property:

1. Lot No 012 B 08, situated in Calabera, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands, containing 39,297 square meters, more or less, as more particularly described on Drawing/Cadastral Plat No. 0 12 B 01, which was registered with the Land Registry as Document No. 1466 on the 15th of March, 1972.
2. Tract 22609 (formerly H-65), situated in Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands, containing an area of 10,845 square meters, more or less, as more particularly described on Drawing/Cadastral Plat No.2165/74, the original of which Was registered June 15, 1976 as Land Registry Document No. 5272.
3. Tract 22610 (formerly H-65 A), situated in Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands, containing an area of 13,558 square meters, more or less, as more particularly described on Drawing/Cadastral Plat No. 2164/74, the original of which was registered June 15, 1976 as Land Registry Document No. 5272.
4. Lot E.A. 579, situated in Laualau, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands, containing an area of 10,056 square meters, more or less, being situated in Land Square Seven, Section R, Units u and v, and Land Square Ten, Section I, Units a and b, as shown on APWO Drawings No. 11411 and 11414 on file with the Clerk of Courts (being all that property conveyed by that Grant of Public Domain from the Government of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands to Joaquin I. Pangelinan executed April 18, 1956 and filed April 25, 1956 at the Clerk of Courts).
5. Tract/Lot No. H-378, situated in Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands, containing an area of 27,537 square meters, more or less, as shown on Division of Lands & Surveys Official survey plat no. 2136/89 dated August 10, 1989, Commonwealth Recorder's File No. 89-2641, the description therein being incorporated herein by reference.
6. Tract/Lot No. H-378 "A", situated in Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands, containing an area of 1,585 square meters, more or less, as shown on Division of Lands & Surveys Official survey plat no. 2136/89 dated August 10, 1989, Commonwealth Recorder's File No.89-2641, the description therein being incorporated herein by reference.
7. Lot 001 C 10, situated in Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands, containing an area of 9,999 square meters, more or less, as more particularly described on Drawing/Cadastral I Plat No. 001 C 01, the original of which was recorded with the Commonwealth Recorder on March 20, 1980, as Document No. 9811.
8. Lot 001 C 16 (part of original Lot 001 C 06), situated in Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands, containing an area of 14,579 square meters, more or less, as more particularly described on Drawing/Cadastral Plat No. 001 C 04, the Original of which was recorded with the Commonwealth Recorder on June 13, 1986, as Document No. 86-1187.
9. Lot 0 12 J 13, Parcel "A", situated in Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands, consisting of the northern portion of Lot 012 J 13, and containing an area of 2,319 square meters, more or less,

Date, Time, and Place of Sale. The sale will be held on Friday, February 22, 2008, at the hour of 1:30 p.m., at the Law Offices of Michael A. White, LLC, Joeten Center, Susupe, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands. The sale will be open to the general public.

Terms and Conditions of Sale. The Terms and Conditions of Sale may be obtained from the undersigned, either prior to or at the sale. These terms and conditions shall govern the conduct of the sale.

DATED, this 17th Jay of January, 2008:

/s/ MICHAEL A. WHITE, Auctioneer

JOE HILL, Esq.,
HILL LAW OFFICES
P.O. Box 500917, Saipan, MP 96950
Phone: (670) 234-6806/7743
FAX: (670) 234-7753

Attorney for Petitioner

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

YOLANDA F. TORRES-AUSTRIA Petitioner, versus **ROGELIO AUSTRIA,** Respondent.) FCD DI CIVIL ACTION NO. 07-0410) **SUMMONS**

TO THE ABOVE-NAMED RESPONDENT:

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and notified to file any answer you wish to make to the Petition for Divorce which is given you herewith, within thirty (30) days after service of this Summons upon you.

YOUR ANSWER SHOULD BE IN WRITING and filed with the Clerk of Court, Guma' Hustisia, Iimwal Aweewe, House of Justice, P.O. Box 500307, Saipan, MP 96950 and served upon petitioner's counsel, Atty. Joe Hill, P.O. Box 500917, Saipan, MP 96950. It may be prepared and signed for you by your counsel and sent to the Clerk of this Court by messenger or mail. It is not necessary for you to appear personally until further notice.

If you fail to file an answer in accordance with this Summons, judgment by default may be taken against you for the relief demanded in the Petition for Divorce.

By order of the above Court:

Dated this 12th day of July, 2007.

/s/ Deputy Clerk of Court
Superior Court

COASTAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

NOTICE OF MEETING OF THE CRM AGENCY OFFICIALS

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 11, Governor Benigno R. Fitial and Lt. Governor Timothy T. Villagomez through the Coastal Resources Management Office (CRMO) hereby give notice that a CRM Agency Officials meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 13, 2008, at 9:00 A.M. at the CRM conference room, 1st floor Morgen Building, Oleai, Saipan.

AGENDA

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS
a) Call to Order
b) Roll Call

II. PERMIT APPLICATION

FPA Pacific Corporation Quarry – CRM Permit no. TMS-2008-X-016
a. Permit application/summary by CRMO
b. Discussion by CRM Agencies/CRMO
c. Permit Status (CRMO/CRM Agencies)

III. OTHER MATTERS
IV. ADJOURNMENT

All interested persons are welcome to attend and to submit written or oral testimony on the above agenda items. [Note: Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 13(a)(7) and Section 13(c), the Board may vote to meet in executive session.]

JOHN B. JOYNER, Ph.D.
Director

Walter D Mendez
P.O. Box 500086 ck
Saipan, MP 96950

Telephone No.: 234-9674 or 285-9704

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

In The Matter Of The Adoptions Of: J.E.W.M., Minor Child By: WALTER D. MENDEZ Petitioner.) **FCD-AD CIVIL ACTION NO. 08-0020**) **NOTICE OF HEARING**

Notice is hereby given that the above-entitled matter is set for a hearing on February 28, 2008, at 1:30 p.m. in Courtroom 205, before the Associate Judge Kenneth L. Govendo.

Dated this 11th day of January, 2008.

Bernadita A. Sablan
Clerk of Court

/s/ By: Deputy Clerk of Court

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ELEVENTH CNMI STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR BOARD MEETING

PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9910(a), the CNMI State Board of Education Committee on Fiscal, Personnel & Administration hereby gives notice that it will be having a Committee Meeting at 9:15 a.m. on Tuesday, February 12, 2008 at BOE Conference Room, 2nd Floor, Retirement Fund Building, Saipan.

AGENDA

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS
II. OLD BUSINESS
III. NEW BUSINESS
1. Updates FY 2008
   a. PSS Local Budget Appropriation
   b. Financial Reports on Local & Federal Fund
   c. Impact on Reading First Funding
2. FY 2009 Proposed Budget
   a. Preparation and Procedures
3. After working hours compensation for program managers & principals
4. Praxis Issues
   a. Updates on Praxis
   b. Teachers concerns
   c. Principals & Counselors Praxis II requirement
   d. School strategic plan to make all its teacher HQT by July 2009
   e. Compensation for passage of Praxis I & II
5. Differential Compensation for Special Education Related Services Personnel
6. Personnel Matters
   a. Recruitment and retention effort
   b. Insurance & retirement issues
   c. Desk Audits of all positions
   d. Contract – deliverables
   e. Filling critical positions: ACA, Director of Finance, Procurement Officer, etc.
7. Professional Development
   a. Mentoring/Coaching
8. ETC Program
   a. Report on ETC Fund
   b. Define school and student related activities
9. Travel Policy
   a. Board passes requirements
   b. Guidelines on "0" travel authorizations
   c. Standard operating procedures [SOP]
   d. Long term travel planning
10. Teacher Certification Requirements
11. Procurement - Electronic System
12. Inventory Management - Electronic System
13. Record Management – Electronic System

V. ADJOURNMENT

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION, Plaintiff, -v- The Estate of ANTONIO LITULUMAR TEREGEYO, Deceased. : CIVIL ACTION NO. 03-0091

NOTICE OF SALE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, pursuant to an Order issued by the Court in this matter on January 4, 2008, I will sell, at public auction, to (he highest bidder, on the terms and conditions set forth hereinbelow, all of the right, title, and interest of Defendants in and to the following property: Lot No. 010 K 270, situated in Dandan, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands, containing an area of 859 square meters, more or less, as more particularly described on Drawing/Cadastral Plat No. 010 K 01 dated August 19, 1987, Commonwealth Recorder's File No. 87-2910, the description therein being incorporated herein by reference.

Date, Time, and Place of Sale. The sale will be held on Friday, February 15, 2008, at the hour of 1:30 p.m., at The Law Offices of Michael A. White, LLC, Joeten Center, Susupe, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands. The sale will be open to the general public.

Terms and Conditions of Sale. The Terms and Conditions of Sale may be obtained from the undersigned, either prior to or at the sale. These terms and conditions shall govern the conduct of the sale.

DATED, this 17th day of January, 2008:

/s/ MICHAEL A. WHITE, Auctioneer

McNamee's lawyers show photos of needles

AP

This photo provided by Emery Celli Brinckerhoff & Abady, is one of the photographs submitted to the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee by Brian McNamee, former personal trainer for pitcher Roger Clemens, on Thursday, Feb. 7, 2008 on Capitol Hill in Washington, showing evidence of alleged use of steroids by Clemens.

WASHINGTON (AP)—Roger Clemens crisscrossed Capitol Hill, hoping a handshake and a smile would help his cause. His accuser, Brian McNamee, brought two photos showing syringes and vials and even a crumpled beer can in a bid to bolster his side of the story.

The star pitcher and his former personal trainer, once steadfast pals, each spent Thursday trying to persuade a House committee he is telling the truth about whether McNamee injected Clemens with steroids and human growth hormone.

"Roger Clemens has put himself in a position where his legacy as the greatest pitcher in baseball will depend less on his ERA and more on his DNA," one of McNamee's lawyers, Earl Ward, said slowly, as though recalling a line from a script.

After meeting with lawyers from the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee for a seven-hour deposition, McNamee beat a path to an exit without saying a word to reporters. He left the talking to his trio of lawyers, who discussed the two color photos of items they say McNamee saved for several years and, when tested, will link Clemens to the use of performance-enhancing drugs.

Less than an hour later, also in the Rayburn House Office Building, the seven-time Cy Young Award winner held his own news conference, after wrapping up the first of two days of meetings with more than a dozen lawmakers, including committee chairman Henry Waxman and ranking Republican Tom Davis.

Clemens said little, but his lawyers repeatedly attacked McNamee's character and scoffed at the newly presented evidence.

"This man has a total history of lying," Clemens' attorney Rusty Hardin said.

McNamee's lawyers called on Clemens to provide a DNA sample. Asked about that, Hardin said the pitcher would comply with any request of that type from a federal authority.

"But they're going to have to come to us," Hardin said.

McNamee's attorneys did not know when the items would be tested—or when the results might be known.

"We look forward to the results of these tests," said another McNamee lawyer, Richard Emery, "and we look forward to just definitively finishing this whole controversy and ending this circus."

McNamee's attorneys said he turned over physical evidence to federal prosecutors, shortly after Clemens held a Jan. 7 nationally televised news conference at which he played a taped conversation between the two men.

"At that point," Ward said, "(McNamee) decided there was no holds barred."

One photo shows a beer can that Emery said was taken out of a trash can in Clemens' New York apartment in 2001. Emery said the beer can contained needles used to inject Clemens. That picture also shows what Emery said was gauze used to wipe blood off Clemens after a shot.

The other photo shows vials of what Emery said were testosterone, and unused needles—items the attorney said Clemens gave to McNamee.

While Clemens' camp called it "manufactured" evidence, Emery said the items were "just a collection of stuff" thrown in a box and "kept in a basement for seven years."

Emery said McNamee kept the items because he "had this inkling and gut feeling that he couldn't trust Roger and better keep something to protect himself in the future."

A relatively subdued Clemens said little at the news conference, essentially repeating the types of brief comments he made earlier Thursday as he walked through marble hallways.

"I'm just glad they made time in their schedule so I can go by and talk to them today," Clemens said shortly before stepping through the wood double doors to Davis' office.

Clemens met with Davis and Waxman for about 20 minutes, then signed an autograph for a bystander upon exiting. That was one of many times Clemens was asked to stop to affix his name to something or pose for a snapshot.

"I'm ready for Wednesday to get here," he said at one point, referring to the public hearing at which he, McNamee, Pettitte and others are to testify.

Clemens spoke to the committee Tuesday—the first time he addressed McNamee's allegations under oath, and therefore the first time he put himself at legal risk if he were to make false statements.

Thursday's bizarre events served as something of a dress rehearsal for Wednesday's session, which will be held in the same wood-paneled hearing room that housed the committee's 2005 hearing with Mark McGwire and Rafael Palmeiro.

That hearing was part of Congress' push to get baseball to toughen its drug program, increasing tests and penalties. It also led to former Senate majority leader George Mitchell's report on doping in baseball, which contained McNamee's allegations that he injected Clemens more than a dozen times with steroids and human growth hormone in 1998, 2000 and 2001. Clemens repeatedly has denied those accusations.

Red Sox, Schilling squabble over surgery

BOSTON (AP)—Curt Schilling has an undisclosed injury in his right shoulder, and the pitcher has been squabbling with the Boston Red Sox over whether he should have surgery that could cost him the season or try something less drastic.

Writing on his blog, 38pitches.com, Schilling said Thursday night that he has agreed to abide by the club's request to rely on rest and rehabilitation.

"There have been disagreements these past few weeks in an effort to provide me with a solution that would allow me to pitch as much as possible during the 2008 season," Schilling wrote. "At no time did I ever consider taking a course of action against the club's wishes. In the end, regardless of who agreed with whom, I have chosen the club's course of action and will vigorously pursue any and every option I can to be able to help this team to another World Series title in 2008."

Red Sox officials have declined to comment other than to issue a two-sentence statement Thursday night confirming that Schilling is injured.

"Curt Schilling was examined by Red Sox doctors in January after he reported feeling right shoulder discomfort," the team said. "Curt has started a program of rest, rehabilitation and shoulder strengthening in an attempt to return to pitching."

The Boston Herald first reported Schilling's injury on its Web site, saying the injury was serious enough to consider surgery that could keep him out for the whole 2008 season. The Boston Globe reported later Thursday that even without surgery Schilling would be out until at least the All-Star break.

The dispute over Schilling's treatment went far enough to lead Schilling to consult with the players' union over his rights.

"I have been consulted by Curt and his representative," said Michael Weiner, a lawyer for the players association. "The Red Sox have no basis to take any action against Curt."

According to a side letter to the collective bargaining agreement, a player has the right to seek a second opinion from his own doctor, but it's in dispute what happens when the team's doctor and the player's disagree on the treatment.

Schilling, who spent seven weeks on the disabled list with right shoulder tendinitis last year, went 9-8 with a 3.87 ERA during the regular season last year. In the playoffs, he went 3-0 with a 3.00 ERA to help the Red Sox win their second World Series in four seasons.

He agreed in November to a one-year, $8 million contract that allows him to earn an addition $5 million in performance and weight bonuses. The 41-year-old right-hander has said that this will be his last year.

Schilling said he passed all physical exams when he negotiated his new contract.

"I knew in my heart of hearts that the extra time I was giving my arm to rest this winter would in fact be the cure for what I went through the entire 2007 season," he wrote. "I had a strong desire to not have to go through multiple cortisone injections in my shoulder for another year. There was absolutely no reason for anyone involved to believe I would be anything other than completely healthy and ready for the 2008 baseball season.

"Things have changed since then."

The co-MVP of the 2001 World Series and a star in both of Boston's recent titles, Schilling became a free agent after the '07 Series but agreed to a deal that included $5 million in weight and performance incentives. The Red Sox questioned whether Schilling's offseason conditioning last winter was responsible for his dropoff in the '07 regular season.

The Red Sox had discussed—and dismissed—the idea of using a six-man rotation this year. With Schilling out for an extended period of time, they are expected to rely on Josh Beckett, Daisuke Matsuzaka, Jon Lester, Tim Wakefield and Clay Buchholz.

Autopsy details Sean Taylor's wounds

MIAMI (AP)—The bullet that killed Washington Redskins safety Sean Taylor ripped first through his right leg and then the left, and possibly came from a 9mm handgun, an autopsy released Thursday said.

The report, obtained by The Associated Press through a public records request filed after Taylor's Nov. 27 death, notes a bullet perforated the soft tissues and muscles of the right groin and the right femoral artery, a crucial pathway for blood.

The bullet tore through muscles of Taylor's upper right thigh, according to the report from the Miami-Dade Medical Examiner, then exited the leg and entered the athlete's left thigh.

A Miami-Dade police report to the medical examiner identified the weapon as a handgun, possibly a 9mm.

Aside from the bullet wounds and a small abrasion on Taylor's right biceps, no other injuries were noted on the player's body. Toxicology tests found no drugs in Taylor's system.

Police said Taylor was a victim of a botched robbery when he was shot in his bedroom at about 1:46 a.m. on Nov. 26. in the Miami suburb of Palmetto Bay. A day later, at 2:41 a.m., he was placed on life support.

He was pronounced dead at 3:35 a.m. on Nov. 27. The autopsy was performed later that day.

The report notes Taylor's numerous tattoos, including "Donna," the name of his mother, on his left arm and a passage from Psalms with hands folded in prayer and the phrase "God Forgive Me" on his left shoulder and upper left arm.

Charged with first-degree felony murder and armed burglary in Taylor's killing are Charles Wardlow, 18; Jason Mitchell and Venjah Hunte, both 20; and the accused gunman, Eric Rivera, 17. All remain behind bars while awaiting trial.

Shaq promises the Suns will rise

Phoenix Suns' Shaquille O'Neal holds up his new jersey during a news conference Thursday, Feb. 7, 2008, in Phoenix.

AP

PHOENIX (AP)—Shaquille O'Neal had strong words for those who doubt he can fit in with the Phoenix Suns.

"I'm very upset," he said Thursday at a news conference to introduce him as a member of his new team. "You just don't really want to get me upset. When I'm upset, I'm known to do certain things—like win championships."

O'Neal, once the game's dominant big man but now slowed by a hip injury, said he is motivated by the negative talk.

"This team has always been there in the Western Conference," he said. "They just couldn't quite get over the hump. I think with my experience and my on the court-off the court leadership, I can help them get over the hump."

Asked what he felt when he heard he could be going to Phoenix, O'Neal said, "I wanted it to happen because I was going to be coming to a fabulous team with a lot of unselfish players, a lot of great players."

He said people are "going to be very surprised" about his role in a Suns running game orchestrated by Steve Nash.

"The last couple of years I was in a system that we really didn't run, so you automatically think I can't run," he said. "But I love to run, especially if I'm playing with a great guy like Steve Nash. I look forward to making people eat their words, I really do."

O'Neal, who turns 36 next month, has been out for two weeks with a hip injury but cleared his physical Wednesday and hopes to play before the All-Star break.

O'Neal was his charming self throughout the news conference. Asked if he knew he looked good in purple, he smiled and said, "I did. Thank you very much."

On Wednesday night, he was also smiling. He stood from his seat in a suite high above the court at US Airways Center. He pointed to his ring finger and gave a thumbs up.

The crowd went crazy. The message he was sending on the big screen at the Phoenix-New Orleans game was clear: He intends to bring to Phoenix the championship that has eluded the Suns through their 40-year history.

The trade that brought O'Neal to Phoenix on Wednesday is one of the most unexpected in NBA history, a blockbuster that sent Shawn Marion and Marcus Banks to Miami and came together in just a few days under first-year Phoenix general manager Steve Kerr.

The criticism has been widespread from fans to talk radio hosts to newspaper columnists. All claimed that Phoenix had acquired a once-great big man far past his prime, a 7-foot-1, 325-pound Goliath who would stifle the Suns' trademark up-tempo game.

And the Suns were taking on a contract that pays O'Neal $20 million each of the next two seasons. Yet coach Mike D'Antoni and the Suns players said they were elated, that they believe O'Neal will be reinvigorated by the move and become a crucial component of their title run.

"We feel like our players are giddy with the possibilities," D'Antoni said, "and he's ready and focused. It's up to the coaching staff to do the tweaks without changing everything, and I don't think we have to."

Nash was "shocked" by the trade.

"If you look at what happened the last 24 hours it was incredible," he said. "You go through a whole bunch of emotions. It was very unexpected, but at the same time to get a chance to play with Shaquille O'Neal is pretty exciting."

The Suns believe whatever ails O'Neal can be cured by their doctors and training staff.

"It's a matter of flexibility in the joints and different things," Kerr said. "They're very progressive with their rehabilitation and they felt very strongly that he's going to be more mobile and explosive than what he has been."

Nash is well aware of questions concerning O'Neal's health.

"There's doubts and a risk to everything," Nash said. "I know that's going to be a favorite talking point for all the media, but for us the talking point is we've got an incredible, huge, talented, charismatic player in our locker room now. ... This sounds like it's going to be a lot of fun."

O'Neal's ability to lift spirits is another plus for a Suns team that seemed joyless despite its success.

"I think the Big Aristotle is going to be fun for us," Nash said. "He has a great personality and he is one of the most exciting, charismatic players we have had in this league in a long time. Hopefully he is as excited to be here as he sounds and as we are and gives everybody a big lift."

O'Neal has averaged 25.6 points and 11.5 rebounds in 16 seasons in the NBA. This season, plagued by injuries and going through a divorce, he's averaging 14.2 points. His 14-year streak as an All-Star choice came to an end this year.

He missed much of the 2006-07 season with a knee injury and finished that season with career lows in games (40), scoring (17.3 points), rebounds (7.4), minutes (28.4) and free-throw percentage (.422).

"When Shaq came to the team four years ago, I always felt it was forever," Heat coach Pat Riley said. "We won a championship with him. We wish him nothing but the best. We have to move on with our team. We're rebuilding."

Yao Ming leads Rockets over Cavs 92-77 despite McGrady illness

HOUSTON (AP)—Yao Ming had 22 points and 12 rebounds as the Houston Rockets beat the Cleveland Cavaliers 92-77 in the NBA on Thursday.

The Rockets overcame a poor night from ailing All-Star Tracy McGrady to make it nine wins from ten games.

Houston outrebounded Cleveland 55-35, the second time the Cavs have been outrebounded by 20 this season. The Cavaliers sorely missed Drew Gooden, their second-leading rebounder. Gooden sat out with a groin injury, the first game he's missed this season.

McGrady was hospitalized earlier in the day with an upper respiratory infection. He arrived at the arena less than an hour before tipoff and scored just eight points on 3-for-11 shooting.

Bulls 114, Warriors 108

In Oakland, California, an undermanned Chicago spoiled Chris Webber's return to Golden State.

Chris Duhon scored a career-high 34 points and Joseph Smith had 27 for the Bulls, who were playing their fourth road game in six nights without three of their top four scorers. Chicago used just eight players.

Webber had four points and two assists in 12 minutes in his first game back with the Warriors, where he played his rookie season more than 13 years ago before forcing a trade.

76ers 101, Heat 84

In Philadelphia, the home team handed short-handed Miami its sixth straight loss.

Andre Iguodala scored 25 and Andre Miller added 21 for the Sixers, who have won four from six.

The Heat were playing their second game since center Shaquille O'Neal was dealt to Phoenix. The players they received for O'Neal—Shawn Marion and Marcus Banks—still have to pass physicals and are expected to play Saturday.

Miami is stuck on a miserable nine wins.

Jones holds slim lead at Pebble Beach

PEBBLE BEACH, Calif. (AP)—The celebrity watch at the AT&T Pebble Beach National Pro-Am took place everywhere but the top of the leaderboard Thursday.

Kent Jones birdied the two most famous par 3s at Pebble Beach and kept bogeys off his card for a 6-under 66 and a one-shot lead, an encouraging start for someone who has played 270 tournaments on the PGA Tour without finishing in the top five.

Nationwide Tour grad Roland Thatcher was a shot back along with Q-school grad Brad Adamonis and John Mallinger, third at Pebble Beach last year as a rookie.

The star gazing took place at Poppy Hills, and while it didn't always produce great golf to match the spectacular sunshine on the Monterey Peninsula, it was entertaining.

Defending champion Phil Mickelson was on the verge of shooting himself out of the tournament until a birdie-eagle-birdie-birdie burst enabled him to recover with a 71.

Greg Norman, playing on the PGA Tour for the first time in 18 months, was holding steady until a four-putt on the 13th hole for a double bogey. He finished with a 76. His fiancee, tennis great Chris Evert, flew in from Florida and didn't make it out to the golf course until Norman was on the 16th.

Evert has no plans to take up golf, saying it was too time-consuming with three boys— "It's like four boys with Greg," she said—and a tennis academy to run.

"Tennis only takes one hour," she said, laughing.

These rounds take close to six hours with two pros and two amateurs in every group, and it was a slow, steady grind.

Norman struggled with that and the bumpy greens, but he had no complaints about how he hit the ball.

"It's a long day of concentration, which I'm not used to," Norman said. "You get past four hours, you really have to stay locked in."

Jones, a 41-year-old from New Mexico who has yet to finish in the top 100 on the money list, has been around long enough to realize that one round is too early to get excited, especially in a format that uses three courses, and in a tournament where the leaderboard doesn't begin to sort itself out until Sunday.

"I think I'm just satisfied that I played well and putted well," Jones said. "When everyone is playing different golf courses, being in the lead isn't every important. But it's nice to be playing well, obviously."

J.B. Holmes, coming off a playoff victory over Mickelson last week in Phoenix, had a 68 at Spyglass Hill to join a group of 10 players that included Todd Demsey, who recently recovered from having a tumor removed from his brain.

The top 14 players on the leaderboard have combined for 10 career victories, and that doesn't include the California State Amateur that Demsey won in 1992.

Davis Love III, returning to the PGA Tour for the first time in four months after a severe ankle injury, overcame an early gaffe on the par-5 14th at Spyglass with three birdies on his back nine for a 70. Vijay Singh also had a 70.

Mickelson was thrilled to even be remotely near the lead.

Lefty had big expectations for his week as he tries to become the first back-to-back winner at Pebble Beach since Mark O'Meara in 1989-90. But he bogeyed his first two holes, had to save par from the fringe on the par-5 ninth, then clipped a tree and went into the water on the par-5 10th, taking another bogey, putting him at 4 over for the round.

Poppy Hills has five par 5s, and Mickelson played the first three in 2 over.

"I was just trying to get back to even par," Mickelson said. "If I shot 3 or 4 over, I would be shooting myself out of the tournament." Instead, he shot himself back into it.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	37	9	.804	_
Toronto	26	21	.553	11 1/2
New Jersey	20	29	.408	18 1/2
Philadelphia	20	30	.400	19
New York	14	35	.286	24 1/2

Southeast Division

Orlando	32	19	.627	_
Washington	24	24	.500	6 1/2
Atlanta	21	24	.467	8
Charlotte	18	31	.367	13
Miami	9	39	.188	21 1/2

Central Division

Detroit	35	13	.729	_
Cleveland	27	21	.563	8
Chicago	20	29	.408	15 1/2
Indiana	20	30	.400	16
Milwaukee	19	31	.380	17

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

Dallas	33	15	.688	_
New Orleans	33	15	.688	_
San Antonio	31	16	.660	1 1/2
Houston	29	20	.592	4 1/2
Memphis	13	35	.271	20

Northwest Division

Utah	32	18	.640	_
Denver	29	19	.604	2
Portland	28	20	.583	3
Seattle	13	36	.265	18 1/2
Minnesota	10	37	.213	20 1/2

Pacific Division

Phoenix	34	15	.694	_
L.A. Lakers	31	17	.646	2 1/2
Golden State	29	20	.592	5
Sacramento	22	25	.468	11
L.A. Clippers	15	31	.326	17 1/2

Yesterday's Games

Philadelphia 101, Miami 84
Houston 92, Cleveland 77
Chicago 114, Golden State 108

PEBBLE BEACH NATIONAL PRO-AM SCORES

FIRSTROUND

Kent Jones	34-32	66
John Mallinger	34-33	67
Roland Thatcher	32-35	67
Brad Adamonis	33-34	67
Jay Williamson	32-36	68
Michael Allen	35-33	68
J.B. Holmes	34-34	68
Kris Cox	33-35	68
D.A. Points	33-35	68
Tim Herron	32-36	68
Robert Floyd	33-35	68
Mark Wilson	36-32	68
Olin Browne	34-34	68
Todd Demsey	32-36	68
Jeff Quinney	34-35	69
Daniel Chopra	36-33	69
Y.E. Yang	37-32	69
Nicholas Thompson	36-33	69
Andrew Buckle	34-35	69
Brent Geiberger	36-33	69
Jason Day	37-32	69
Steve Allan	34-35	69
Brandel Chamblee	34-35	69
Dudley Hart	34-35	69
Steve Lowery	35-34	69
Alejandro Canizares	38-32	70
Jonathan Kaye	36-34	70
Marc Turnesa	35-35	70
Doug LaBelle II	33-37	70
J.J. Henry	34-36	70
Davis Love III	33-37	70
Vijay Singh	35-35	70
Tom Pernice, Jr.	34-36	70
Charley Hoffman	37-33	70
Tom Scherrer	36-34	70
Parker McLachlin	35-35	70
Jeff Overton	33-37	70
Jason Gore	37-33	70
Justin Leonard	35-35	70
Michael Letzig	32-38	70
Matt Jones	34-36	70
Kevin Streelman	36-34	70
Jonathan Moore	36-34	70
Robert Damron	36-35	71
Kevin Na	33-38	71
Ryan Armour	36-35	71
Dan Forsman	36-35	71
Phil Mickelson	39-32	71
Jim McGovern	36-35	71
Daisuke Maruyama	36-35	71
David Frost	33-38	71
Carlos Franco	37-34	71
Peter Tomasulo	34-37	71
John Merrick	37-34	71
Ryan Moore	35-36	71
Mathew Goggin	35-36	71
Ted Purdy	38-33	71
Duffy Waldorf	37-34	71
Jim Furyk	36-35	71
Brian Bateman	35-36	71
Rocco Mediate	37-35	72
Johnson Wagner	35-37	72
Brian Davis	37-35	72
Jin Park	34-38	72
Padraig Harrington	35-37	72
Craig Kanada	38-34	72
Alex Cejka	35-37	72
Kenneth Ferrie	37-35	72
Jeff Gove	38-34	72
Michael Sim	36-36	72
James Driscoll	35-37	72
Frank Lickliter II	35-37	72
Greg Kraft	38-34	72
Harrison Frazar	36-36	72
Steve Pate	35-37	72
Jeff Maggert	36-36	72
Larry Mize	37-35	72
Cody Freeman	35-37	72
J.P. Hayes	33-39	72
Omar Uresti	35-37	72
John Riegger	34-38	72
Jimmy Walker	39-33	72
Tadd Fujikawa	36-36	72
Peter Jacobsen	36-37	73
Andres Romero	36-37	73
Brad Elder	37-36	73
Brandt Snedeker	35-38	73
John Morse	39-34	73
Tim Clark	35-38	73
Tag Ridings	38-35	73
Fredrik Jacobson	36-37	73
Marco Dawson	37-36	73
Garrett Willis	37-36	73
Corey Pavin	36-37	73
Richard S. Johnson	35-38	73
Martin Laird	38-35	73
Tommy Gainey	37-36	73
Scott Sterling	35-38	73
Skip Kendall	41-32	73
Charlie Wi	38-35	73
Paul Goydos	36-37	73
John Huston	35-38	73
Chris Riley	35-38	73
Grant Waite	39-34	73
Dustin Johnson	38-35	73
Chris Stroud	33-40	73
Greg Owen	37-36	73
Eric Axley	36-38	74
Craig Stadler	39-35	74
Gavin Coles	37-37	74
Justin Bolli	36-38	74
Paul Stankowski	37-37	74
Andrew Magee	38-36	74
Craig Barlow	39-35	74
D.J. Trahan	38-36	74
Bob May	38-36	74
Tim Wilkinson	41-33	74
Mike Wilson	37-37	74
Jay Delsing	38-36	74
Rick Leibovich	39-35	74
Patrick Sheehan	38-36	74
Chris DiMarco	37-37	74
Paul Claxton	36-38	74
Robert Gamez	38-36	74
Bob Heintz	39-35	74
David Lutterus	39-35	74
Joel Kribel	39-35	74
Pat Perez	40-34	74
Glen Day	39-35	74
Lee Janzen	37-37	74
Joe Ogilvie	36-38	74
Bo Van Pelt	39-35	74
Jason Allred	37-37	74
Ron Whittaker	38-36	74
Guy Boros	40-35	75
Billy Andrade	37-38	75
Mike Weir	38-37	75
Mathias Gronberg	38-37	75
Ken Duke	39-36	75
Bob Burns	39-36	75
Dean Wilson	37-38	75
David Duval	37-38	75
Hunter Mahan	35-40	75
Matt Kuchar	39-36	75
Jonathan Byrd	40-35	75
Len Mattiace	38-37	75
Tom Lehman	37-38	75
Spike McRoy	37-38	75
Travis Perkins	39-37	76
Chris Smith	37-39	76
Nick Watney	38-38	76
Tom Byrum	38-38	76
Mark Hensby	39-37	76
Scott McCarron	36-40	76
Kevin Sutherland	41-35	76
Mike Heinen	40-36	76
Greg Norman	36-40	76
Brenden Pappas	36-40	76
Chad Collins	39-37	76
J.L. Lewis	39-37	76
Bob Sowards	39-37	76
Tim Petrovic	40-36	76
Phil Tataurangi	37-39	76
Kyle Thompson	37-39	76
Mark Brooks	40-37	77
Shane Bertsch	36-41	77
Colt Knost	42-35	77
Jim Gallagher, Jr.	38-39	77
Willie Wood	39-38	77
Brett Rumford	40-38	78
Jason Dufner	40-38	78
Ross Fisher	42-36	78
Ryan Dillon	40-38	78
Richard Johnson	39-39	78
Ryan Palmer	42-36	78
Steve Elkington	43-35	78
John Daly	40-39	79
Joey Sindelar	40-39	79
Dicky Pride	42-37	79
Keith Clearwater	41-44	85

By The Associated Press

Fajardo feasts on pool rivals

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSISTANT EDITOR

Lady Lucky smiled Luis "Predator" Fajardo's way during last Sunday's Top Pool Bar Professional 9-Ball Billiards Tournament at the Garapan watering hole and sports bar.

Going up against R.J."Bullet" Mascarinas in the best-of-seven finals, Fajardo pulled off a miraculous win when Mascarinas missed on a bank shot on the final 9-ball.

That was the kind of opportunity the lanky Fajardo was hoping for, as he proceeded to pocket his remaining three balls—including the 9-ball—to win the weekly championship.

"Yes it was a tough night. All my matches resulted on a hill-hill game but by not giving up, things turned around even if the opponent was shooting the last ball. All of my hard work is slowly paying off with practice and being able to challenge some of the elite pool players on the island," said Fajardo.

Last week's 9-ball winner encouraged the island's pool aficionados to come visit them at Top Pool Bar.

"I would like to invite all the pool players to come and join us every Saturday and Thursday at Top Pool Bar just as the Hawk (Vic Hocog) stated on his last match, if you want to elevate your game to the next level, come and play billiards with us. Thanks to my wife who had been so supportive the whole time and for being there on every tournament I join," he said.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Luis "Predator" Fajardo defeated R.J."Bullet" Mascarinas to win the Top Pool Bar Professional 9-Ball Billiards Tournament last Sunday at the Garapan watering hole and sports bar.

Fajardo got off to a quick start, upsetting Hocog, 4-3, when the defending champion scratched on the 8-ball that gave Fajardo a ball-in-hand on the 9-ball and the automatic win.

Other first round matches saw Mascarinas win over Erick Caisip, 4-2; Erwin Gomez beat Jon Morris, 4-3; Zheng Jian Qing take out Primo Ferrera, 4-1; and Robert Sanciangco oust Rolly Villanueva, 4-2.

In the second round, Mascarinas escaped with a 4-3 win over Gomez when the latter missed on the 7-ball giving the former a chance to run the remaining balls and the victory.

Fajardo, for his part, overcame Zheng in a tight and exciting match, 4-3. The turning point came when Zheng missed the 9-ball that Fajardo was all but willing to capitalize.

Third round action, meanwhile, saw Mascarinas drub Sanciangco, 4-1, to advance to the finals to take on Fajardo, who got a bye in the semis.

The win was worth $65 for Fajardo, while Mascarinas settled for the $35 runner-up purse.

Top Pool Bar Professional 9-Ball Billiards Tournament is held every Saturday and the entry fee is $10.

The format is a race to four games. The venue's 8-ball tournament, meanwhile, has been moved to Thursday with also a $10 entry fee. The 8-ball competition uses a double-elimination format. Both tournaments follow Billiards Congress of America rules.

The sports bar is reminding interested 8- and 9-ball players that early birds get a chance to practice for free on any of Top Pool Bar's full-size billiard tables an hour before the competition.

Top Pool Bar, located along Hotel Street Garapan a stone's throw away from the Paseo de Marianas, is as spacious as it is modern and boasts of two 9-1/2-by-5-foot tables usually found in professional tournaments abroad.

For more information on the ongoing 9-ball weekly competition, call Zheng at 287-7676 or check out the competition's website at www.saipanero.com/bars/toppoolbar.

RGA

From Page 28

Top 5 in last weekend's event with their net scores of 68 and 71, respectively.

Ten other weekend warriors took part in the golf tournament—RGA president Adam Hardwicke (net 74), Bae Yong Man (74), 2007 RGA Club Champion Andy Nepaial (74), Sonny Flores (74), new member William Maui (74), Jess K. Wabol (75), Luis Byun Jr. (77), Joe Wabol (77), Nick Sablan (79), and Joe Saures (82).

In the closest to the pin competition, Kaipat was without peer in hole No. 6, while Jess Wabol ruled hole No. 15.

Wabol also reminded the public that that the club has halved its membership dues for 2008 from the long-standing fee of $50 to only $25.

Wabol said this happened after RGA recognized the hard economic times and decided to give its members and future members a break by slashing the cost of becoming part of RGA.

He said he hopes by making membership in RGA a little lighter in the pocket, more weekend warriors will now return to the golf links and renew their membership or apply as new members of the golf club.

Wabol added that RGA is also instituting a new promotion this year wherein members who take part in at least 10 rounds by the time the annual RGA Turkey Shoot in November comes around, will get free entry into the tournament.

For more information about RGA's upcoming February Ace of the Month Tournament, new membership policies, and other competitions held by the club, contact Hardwicke at 483-2926 or Wabol at 233-3673.

SHAQ

From Page 28

Asked if even the always upbeat Steve Nash had grown frustrated with three straight not-quite-good-enoughs in the playoffs, Kerr said, "Maybe he was a little frustrated. He needed something like this. We all did. We see what Kevin Garnett has done in Boston, what Pau Gasol did in his first game in Los Angeles. Look, our locker room wasn't in turmoil. People weren't fighting or anything, and I've got nothing but great things to say about Shawn (Marion). But whatever was missing was missing."

Nash, a two-time MVP, couldn't have gotten a much better birthday present than Shaq's arrival. The two had developed a mutual admiration during all-star games and other league events. When the trade was completed, Shaq text-messaged Nash, saying, "I will not let you down." Nash said later, "He's always been one of my favorites in the league. I've been a huge fan, not just of him as a player, which we all are, but of him as a person—his personality, his sense of humor, the way he can affect a room."

Despite having the best record in the superior Western Conference at the time of the trade, the Suns indeed were missing that spark. Asked how he would change the mood, Shaq smiled and said, "By being me." He came right out and said he's going to make the Suns best big man, all-star Stoudemire, a better player. "This is the Amare Stoudemire Project for me," Shaq said. "He's in the top three, top five power forwards. I want him to be the Number One power forward." Shaq said he would make Raja Bell one of the best shooters in the conference, undoubtedly by drawing Bell's defender in double-teams.

Shaq had taken dozens of notes mentally during the Suns' breath-snatching double-overtime loss to New Orleans Wednesday night. He liked what he saw.

"What more could a big man ask for? This is a great team with or without me. I'm just going to try to get them over the hump," he said. "It's a great time for me to be here. I'm the son of a military drill sergeant. It's four (years) and relocate. It was Germany, then San Antonio, then Baton Rouge, then Orlando, then Los Angeles, then Miami, now Phoenix. My father said, `This is what we do — four and relocate.' I've always been able to go somewhere else and create new relationships."

Of course, the question that will follow Shaq until he's on the floor and once again productive (vs. Kobe and the Lakers here in Phoenix on Feb. 20?) is whether he's physically able to play. Shaq talked at length about the alternative brand of corrective medicine the Suns medical staff uses and said he doesn't expect to have the trouble running that his critics foresee. Coach Mike D'Antoni said he'd love to have Shaq for 25 to 30 minutes a game, especially down the stretch and in playoff games. The Suns have allowed opposing teams more putback baskets than anybody in the NBA, partly because they're so small they have to double-team big centers. That's the No. 1 thing the Suns need Shaq to do.

"People will always define me by my wonder years," Shaq said. "I understand that. I averaged 27, 28 points, 13 and 14 rebounds a game. But all the greats, as they get older, their numbers go down. But I can still pass. I can still rebound and kick it out. You play the way the Suns do, the first thing you need is somebody to ignite the fast break."

Somebody asked Shaq what he thought about the Suns in recent years, what as an opponent he thought they needed to make that final step, from runner-up to finalist. He didn't have to consult a checklist. "A big man," Shaq said simply.

TWO

From Page 28

champion Boku-chan in the finals. Deleon Guerrero was a member of Boku-chan, Fujimoto's Team B, meanwhile, failed to finish past the elimination round.

Last week, 15-year-old Japan Professional Wakeboard Association national champion Toshiki and three other wakeboarders visited Saipan. Toshiki won the Land of the Rising Sun's open title last year against older and veteran wakeboarders.

Toshiki came to Saipan along with 14-year-old Nari, who is also a professional wakeboarder; Natsuki, 12; and Mizuki, 10.

It was Toshiki's and Nari's first time to visit Saipan, while Natsuki and Mizuki, who are still amateur wakeboarders, visited the islands more than once.

Fajardo feasts on pool rivals

Lady Lucky smiled Luis "Predator" Fajardo's way during last Sunday's Top Pool Bar Professional 9-Ball Billiards Tournament at the Garapan watering hole and sports bar. 27

Saipan Tribune
Sports

McNamee's lawyers show photos of needles

Roger Clemens crisscrossed Capitol Hill, hoping a handshake and a smile would help his cause. 25

Leong, Langton start campaign for Islanders

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSISTANT EDITOR

Pacific Oceania carryovers Michael Leong and Juan Sebastian Langton took on separate Kuwati opponents during the start of the first round of 2008 Asia/Oceania Zone Group II competition yesterday at the Bassam Al-Motawa Tennis Center in Mishref, Kuwait.

Results, however, were still not available as of press time as the first match started at around 5pm, CNMI time.

Lee and Langton were expected to have their hands full as they each faced ATP-ranked opponents during the first day of the three-day tie at the Middle East country.

Langton took on Kuwait No. 1 Mohammad Ghareeb in the first singles game. Ghareeb comes into his match against Langton with the more checkered resume as he is currently ranked 434 in singles and 288 in doubles in the ATP.

And as if taking on a more experienced player wasn't enough, Langton's problems had been compounded after the airline he flew into Kuwait to lost his racquet bag and has been unhelpful in getting it to him in time for the tie. As a result, Langton has had to use borrowed racquets during the match.

Leong

Langton

Lee, who is the Islanders' No. 1, was scheduled to see action in the second singles game, where he was expected to square off against another seeded Kuwaiti netter in the person of Abdullah Magdas, who boasts of an ATP ranking of 980 in singles and 1,320 in doubles.

Magdas played college tennis in the U.S., and former Pacific Oceania Davis Cupper West Nott of the Marshall Islands has provided the team some background on him.

The doubles will follow the opening singles matches today, Feb. 9. At this stage, Islanders captain Cyrille Mainguy (Vanuatu) has named Leong and Cyril Jacobe for the doubles, but this can be changed up to an hour before the match starts.

Kuwait team captain Khaled Al Foudari, meanwhile, will counter with his two top players, Ghareeb and Magdas, in the doubles. Mohammad-Khaliq Siddiq and Ahmad Rabeea Muhammad complete the four-man Kuwait Davis Cup team for its tie against the Islanders.

The Pacific Oceania-Kuwait tie concludes on Sunday, Feb. 10, with the reverse doubles pitting Leong against Ghareeb in the first match and Langton and Magdas squaring off in the second.

Mainguy, who succeeded the CNMI's Jeff Race at the helm of the Islanders, said the players are all in good spirits and looking forward to the start of the tie.

Aside from Leong (Solomon Islands), Langton (Samoa), and Jacobe (Vanuatu), the Pacific Oceania Davis Cup team is also made up of Leon So'onalole (Samoa). Gerard Winter of New Caledonia will serve as the team manager for the first tie.

Kuwait leads the head-to-head against Pacific Oceania, 2-1.

RGA monthly ace on Feb. 16

By MARK RABAGO
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Refaluwasch Golf Association February Ace of the Month Tournament will be held on Feb. 16, Saturday, at the Kingfisher Golf Links in Talafofo.

Check-in time for the competition is 11am with tee off set an hour later at 12pm. The score to beat is the net 67 scored by Ed "Doi" Tenorio during the club's monthly qualifier held last Sunday also at Kingfisher.

The 12-handicap golfer arrived at the 67 net following a 39-40 in the front and back nines gave him a gross score of 79.

Tenorio actually finished tied with Asterio Tawanpiy, but beat out the son of the islands' master navigator in the front nine net score, 33-35.

Tawanpiy, for his part, carded a 42-39 to come away with a gross of 81, which minus his 14 handicap, tied him with Tenorio.

Bill Kaipat was a stroke off the co-leaders' pace with his net 68, after shooting a gross of 76 based on the eight-handicap swinger's 40-36 (76) front and back nine record.

RGA president "emeritus" and current tournament director Jess Wabol and Department of Public Works Joe Demapan round out the

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Two more Japanese pro wakeboarders in 'town'

By MARK RABAGO
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Five months after taking part in the 5th Annual Chagi Cup, Japan Wake Board Association Gator Board professional riders Yoshiyuki Hatakeyama and Makoto Fujimoto are again on Saipan for a three-day visit.

J&K Marine Sports owner Kumiko Deleon Guerrero said Hatakeyama and Fujimoto arrived on Saipan last Thursday, Feb. 7. They have scheduled a wakeboarding practice run—where hopefully they will show off their butter slide, tootsie roll, half-cab, scarecrow, and hoochies glide tricks—this morning in the waters off Saipan Grand Hotel and Saipan World Resort in Susupe.

According to Deleon Guerrero, Hatakeyama and Fujimoto, both in their early 30s, own a wakeboard shop in Japan called Wakeboard Towing Shop and are on island to give 11 of their customers a tour of Saipan.

The two Japanese wakeboarding pros and their clients are scheduled to leave the CNMI tomorrow, Feb. 10. Deleon Guerrero, however, guaranteed that Hatakeyama and Fujimoto, along with several other wakeboarding pros, will be back on Saipan this October for the staging of the 6th Annual Chagi Cup.

During last year's race Hatakeyama's Team Hatake lost to eventual

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A participant from last year's 5th Annual Chagi Cup prepares to show off her wakeboarding skills. The past two weeks saw four professional wakeboarders visit Saipan.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

By MICHAEL WILBON
The Washington Post

Shaq welcomes wake-up call

Shaquille O'Neal had heard all the bad stuff over the previous 48 hours, in the time since he'd been traded, stunningly, from Miami to Phoenix. Too fat, too old, too slow, too often injured, too unmotivated, too incompatible with the Suns' run-and-shoot, high-wire act to ever fit in here.

"I have no reaction," Shaq said initially, a moment before launching into a reaction, one that makes the Suns' coaches and players grin like little schoolboys who know the big grizzly bear has been awakened and isn't happy about it.

"You all are going to be surprised," Shaq said Thursday morning. "I look forward to making people eat their words. I do. I really do. When I'm very upset I'm known to do certain things, like win championships."

It was 15 1/2 years ago that the late Cotton Fitzsimmons walked a newly acquired Charles Barkley into an empty arena and told him the Suns had a shiny new arena and a building full of patrons every night, and it was his job to put a championship banner in the rafters. Barkley got close, taking the Suns to the NBA Finals in 1993, but the franchise hasn't been that far since. And Shaq's first official appearance was compared to Barkley's, though nobody took Shaq into the arena and pointed to the ceiling.

Shaq charmed folks in the desert Thursday as Barkley did when he arrived.

"I'm coming to a fabulous team with a lot of great shooters," Shaq said. "I was telling Steve (Kerr, the Suns' general manager), `Thanks for bringing me to the land of shooters.' "

Professional basketball is the No. 1 sporting passion here in the desert because the Suns have been around a lot longer than the NFL Cardinals, MLB Diamondbacks and NHL Coyotes. And people have been in a dark basketball mood since, according to them, NBA Commissioner David Stern stole the title from them last May by wrongly suspending Amare Stoudemire and Boris Diaw in that now infamous dust-up with the Spurs. Shaq's arrival brought essentially the first smile to their faces since then.

Kerr, long on common sense and impossible not to root for, played with Shaq once upon a time, and he's the person whose stock will rise or crash depending on how this turns out. He hadn't had any sleep and had lost weight over the last few days, but his face was brightened just by Shaq's presence. "I don't think there's been a person in the history of the league who could so quickly change the mood of the room," Kerr said. "Already, we have a better spirit about us."

In other words, Shaq lifted a civic funk and he hasn't even played yet.

"Our emotional well-being as a team," Kerr said, "had grown a little stale."

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